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FINDINGS OF FACT and STATEMENT of OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS regarding the TESORO DEL VALLE PROJECT

PROJECT NUMBER: 92-074-(5)
GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT: 92-074-(5)
ZONE CHANGE: 92-074-(5)
CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT: 92-074-(5)
OAK TREE PERMIT: 92-074-(5)
TENTATIVE TRACT MAP: 51644

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NUMBER: 93021007

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL PLANNING
320 WEST TEMPLE STREET
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012

MAY 1999

FINDINGS OF FACT AND STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NUMBER 93021007) FOR THE TESORO DEL VALLE PROJECT (PROJECT NUMBER 92-074)

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors ("Board") hereby certifies that the Tesoro del Valle Project Final Environmental Impact Report, State Clearinghouse Number 93021007 (which consists of the Draft EIR dated October, 1995, Technical Appendices to Draft EIR dated October, 1995, the Final Environmental Impact Report dated December, 1996, and the Additional Environmental Information For Inclusion In Final EIR For Revised Tesoro del Valle Project dated October 1998 (collectively referred to as the "FEIR")) has been completed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code §§ 21000, et seq.) ("CEQA"), the State CEQA Guidelines and the County's Environmental Guidelines; and that the Board has received, reviewed and considered the information contained in the FEIR, the applications for the general and area plan amendment, zone change, vesting tentative tract map, conditional use permit and oak tree permit, all public hearings held with respect thereto, and submissions of testimony from officials and departments of the County of Los Angeles ("County"), the Applicant (as defined below), the public and other municipalities and agencies. Concurrently with the adoption of these findings, the Board will adopt, in accordance with CEQA Section 21081.6, a Mitigation Monitoring Plan.

Having received, reviewed and considered the foregoing information, as well as any and all other information in the record, the Board hereby makes findings pursuant to and in accordance with CEQA Section 21081 of the Public Resources Code as follows:

Background

The Tesoro del Valle Project as revised by the Applicant in response to concerns and direction by the Board (the "Revised Project Design"), is a phased development of a total of 1,791 single-family and multi-family dwelling units, approximately 6.2 acres of commercial use, one elementary school site, 61.8 acres of active parks, a fire station site, a 13.9 acre swimming and tennis club and support facilities, and riding/hiking and equestrian trails, on approximately 1,795 acres in the northwestern portion of Los Angeles County. Generally, the site is located in the unincorporated portion of Los Angeles County north of the City of Santa Clarita,

approximately 1/2 mile south of the Angeles National Forest and 2 miles east of Interstate 5 (Golden State Freeway). San Francisquito Canyon Road runs along portions of the eastern boundary of the project site. Site access is currently provided from San Francisquito Canyon Road on Farmer John Lateral Road and will be provided in the near future from Copper Hill Drive (estimated completion date of May 1999).

Surrounding land uses include vacant hillside private property and open space within the Angeles National Forest to the north, small farms and ranches scattered along San Francisquito Road to the east, vacant hillside private property and Wayside Honor Rancho to the west and various urban projects either pending or under development to the south and southeast. The two closest approved and currently under construction projects include a total of 1,402 single-family units, 577 multi-family units and 300,000 square feet of commercial (Tracts 46389 and 45440). In addition, a Lockheed Aerospace facility is located approximately 1 mile south of the southwesterly edge of the project site, which facility has been approved by the City of Santa Clarita for an additional 3.5 million square feet of industrial development.

The Revised Project Design site is undeveloped, except for a rancho house, swimming pool, tennis courts, horse corrals, equipment storage sheds and a caretaker's residence. Historically, portions of the site have been utilized for agricultural and ranch uses, mainly concentrated in the southeastern portion of the property. Currently, about 110 acres of the site are used for agricultural purposes, mainly being dry farmed with alfalfa crops. Rural dirt and fire roads provide access to the remainder of the site. Portions of the ranch house complex has historical significance and will be preserved. The County has designated approximately 107 acres of the Revised Project Design site as Significant Ecological Area (SEA), No. 19.

In addition, subsequent to County approvals, the following agency approvals must be obtained: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Section 404 Permit, Regional Water Quality Control Board Permit and Section 401 Water Quality Certification, State Department of Fish and Game Section 1603 Streambed Alteration Agreement, Local Agency Formation Commission annexation or deannexation of the project site into various agency jurisdictional boundaries (e.g. sanitation and water districts).

Montalvo Properties LLC and Evans-Collins Community Builders (the "Applicant") propose to develop the Revised Project Design site as a master-planned community of three distinct neighborhoods that will provide the Santa Clarita Valley area with a broad array of dwelling types in close proximity to existing and approved future commercial and industrial employment centers. The discretionary approvals required from the County in association with the Revised Project Design include a general and

area plan amendment, zone change, vesting tentative tract map, conditional use permit and oak tree permit.

The Environmental Impact Report

The project initially proposed by the Applicant (the "proposed project") consisted of 3,000 dwelling units. An Initial Study for the proposed project was prepared in August, 1992. In September, 1992, the Initial Study determined that an Environmental Impact Report was required and it identified potential environmental impacts attributable to the proposed project. These potential environmental impacts were geotechnical, flood, noise, air quality, water quality, biota, visual qualities, traffic/access, sewage disposal, educational facilities, fire service and safety, sheriff services, cultural resources and utilities (water service and solid waste disposal). As a result of the Initial Study, it was determined that the proposed project would not have a significant impact in terms of environmental safety.

The Draft EIR analyzed both proposed project and cumulative effects on the potential environmental impacts identified by the Initial Study. The Draft EIR identified a variety of mitigation measures to minimize, reduce, avoid or compensate for the potential adverse effects of the proposed project.

The Draft EIR also discussed a number of potential alternatives to the proposed project, including: (1) no project, (2) existing general plan alternative, (3) reduced density alternative, (4) reduced development area alternative, (5) emergency access alternatives, (6) balanced residential/commercial project alternative, and (7) pedestrian oriented development alternative. Potential environmental impacts of each of these alternatives were discussed at the CEQA-prescribed level of detail and comparisons were made to the proposed project. This range of reasonable alternatives has permitted a reasoned choice to be made by the Board in directing specific design changes to the proposed project.

After conducting its own internal departmental review and analysis of the proposed project through the screencheck process, the County Department of Regional Planning circulated copies of the preliminary Draft EIR to all affected County agencies for a 30-day review period beginning May 9, 1994. Interested County agencies provided written comments on the document and those comments were responded to in writing and were appended to and made a part of the Draft EIR.

The Draft EIR was made available for public comment and input for the period set forth by State law. Specifically, the public review period commenced on

October 24, 1995, when a notice of completion was sent to the State Clearinghouse. The official review period for state agencies was set from October 17, 1995, to December 1, 1995. The public review period lasted 90 days, from October 24, 1995 to January 24, 1996. A Publication Notice for Draft EIR was published in the Newhall Signal and the Daily Journal on October 24, 1995, and was sent to property owners within a 500 foot radius of the proposed project site and to known interested individuals and organizations. Copies of the Draft EIR were also made available at the Regional Planning Department and in local public libraries.

The Regional Planning Commission ("Commission") held public hearings on January 24, February 28 and April 16, 1996, when the public hearing before the Commission was closed. A site visit was made by the Commission on February 26, 1996. Written comments on the justification for the proposed general and area plan amendments were accepted by the Commission until April 30, 1996. On May 7, 1996, the Commission determined that there was justification for plan amendments applicable to the subject property but directed changes to the project as originally proposed. During the course of the public hearings, concerns were raised regarding the density of the proposed project and about the proposed project's impacts on the SEA. As noted above, the project initially proposed by the Applicant consisted of 3,000 dwelling units. Subsequent to the May 7 Commission meeting, and in response to concerns raised and suggestions made by the Commission, the Applicant revised the vesting tentative tract map to reduce the number of residential units to 2,502, eliminating all of the 423 multi-family dwelling units previously proposed for development in project Planning Area D within the SEA, reducing by 310 units the number of dwelling units proposed for development in Planning Area C, the portion of the project site nearest to the Angeles National Forest, and reducing by 112 units the number of dwelling units proposed for development in Planning Area B. To offset the loss of units in these Areas, the Applicant proposed to increase the number of dwelling units in Planning Area A by 347 units. Instead of multi-family residential units in Planning Area D, the Applicant proposed and the Commission agreed that the area would be developed as an outdoor sports complex including soccer fields, baseball diamonds and other recreational uses. On July 2, 1996, the Commission approved in concept the revisions to the project as originally proposed. Thereafter, the Applicant prepared and processed through the County's Subdivision Committee the necessary revised vesting tentative tract map.

Detailed responses to the comments received regarding the project as originally proposed and the analyses of the Draft EIR were prepared with assistance by a private consultant, reviewed, and revised as necessary to reflect the County's independent judgment on issues raised. These Responses to Comments are embodied in the FEIR.

On February 12, 1997, the Commission made environmental findings, adopted Resolutions recommending certification of the FEIR and approval of the general and area plan amendments and zone change, and approved the conditional use permit, oak tree permit and the revised vesting tentative tract map. The project as approved by the Commission is hereinafter referred to as the "RPC Preferred Project." The decision of the Commission was appealed to the Board by the City of Santa Clarita (the "City"). After holding a public hearing on the appeal on May 27, 1997, the Board approved a motion by Supervisor Antonovich which directed the Applicant "to develop a revised design that would take into account the following goals:"

1. The grading in Area B would be reduced by 50 to 75 percent;

2. All urban density in the project would be confined to Area A; none of the removed units from Area B were to be transferred to other areas on the site;

3. The design of Areas B and C should include "estate" lots of 2 and 5 acres;

4. Onsite and offsite road improvements should be provided on a schedule developed with the County Department of Public Works to minimize, "to the extent practicable," impacts to the circulation systems in the area;

5. Fully improved park sites, trails and soccer fields would be provided with each project phase;

6. Provide a completed fire station facility, with timing and location to be determined by the Fire Chief; and

7. Final dwelling unit count to be a product of the design revisions noted above and other recommendations of the Departments of Regional Planning, Public Works, Parks and Recreation, and Fire and the City of Santa Clarita.

At a continued public hearing on March 24, 1998, the Board reviewed a revised project design that had been developed by the Applicant to address those goals established by the Board on May 27, 1997. The motion by Supervisor Antonovich noted the following:

"The applicant returned with a revised conceptual design for 1,791 residential units while at the same time incorporating the required revisions. The applicant also agreed to a series of highway mitigations proposed by the Department of Public Works to benefit the surrounding area. Those mitigations include a requirement that no tract map may be recorded prior to the construction of two lanes of Copper Hill Drive (including the bridge over San Francisquito Canyon Creek) between McBean Parkway and Newhall Ranch Road and a requirement that the applicant contribute $5,000 per home for additional regional road improvements in addition to its standard bridge and thoroughfare fee contributions.

Moreover, the applicant has promised to submit other agreements with the local school districts, historic society and youth soccer league for the record. Taken together, these are significant concessions by the applicant and warrant approval of a Plan Amendment They address not only the impacts of the project but also many existing deficiencies within the Santa Clarita Valley. According to staff at the City of Santa Clarita, the City staff, who opposed the original proposal, now supports the approval of the development provided that these agreements are included within the conditions of approval."

In consideration of the Applicant's revised design and commitment to additional traffic conditions/mitigation as noted above, the Board adopted the following motion regarding the revised project on March 24, 1998:

1. That the public hearing be continued to July 28, 1998;

2. The Applicant submit a revised tentative map to the Subdivision Committee with no more than 1,791 residential lots and which conforms to the design goals described in the May 27, 1997 Board motion, as well as the revised project design reviewed by the Board at its March 24, 1998 meeting;

3. The Applicant submit proposed mitigation agreements with the local school districts, youth soccer league, and historic society; and,

4. County staff review the revised materials submitted by the Applicant and prepare necessary environmental documentation for the Board to

consider the revised project proposal at the continued hearing on July 28, 1998.

The July 28, 1998 hearing was subsequently continued and rescheduled for October 27, 1998.

The Applicant prepared and processed through the County's Subdivision Committee the necessary revised vesting tentative tract map. In addition, the County Department of Regional Planning caused to be prepared an environmental assessment entitled "Additional Environmental Information For Inclusion In Final EIR For Revised Tesoro Del Valle Project," and made it available to all public agencies who commented on the Draft EIR and to other interested parties prior to the continued public hearing on October 27, 1998.

On October 27, 1998, after a continued public hearing on the Revised Project Design, the Board closed the public hearing and instructed Staff to bring back proposed resolutions, findings and conditions for final approval of the Revised Project Design.

On December 21, 1998, the Board adopted a Resolution approving the general and area plan amendments.

The Board hereby makes the following environmental findings in connection with its approval of the zone change, the conditional use permit, the oak tree permit and the revised vesting tentative tract map.

The FEIR has been prepared for the County in accordance with CEQA, as amended, and State and County Guidelines for the implementation of CEQA. More specifically, the County has relied on Section 15084(d)(3) of the State Guidelines, which allow acceptance of drafts prepared by the Applicant, a consultant retained by the Applicant, or any other person. The Department of Regional Planning, acting as lead for the County, has reviewed and edited as necessary the submitted drafts to reflect its own independent judgment to the extent of its ability, including reliance on County technical personnel from other departments.

Section 1 of these findings discusses the potential environmental effects of the Revised Project Design which are not significant or which have been mitigated to a level of insignificance. Section 2 discusses the significant unavoidable environmental effects of the Revised Project Design which cannot be feasibly mitigated to a level of insignificance. Section 3 discusses the growth-inducing impacts of the Revised Project

Design. Section 4 discusses the alternatives to the Revised Project Design discussed in the FEIR. Section 5 discusses the mitigation monitoring program for the Revised Project Design. Section 6 contains the Statement of Overriding Considerations. Section 7 contains the Section 15091 and 15092 findings. Section 8 contains the Section 21082.1(c)(3) findings. The findings set forth in each section are supported by substantial evidence in the administrative record of the Revised Project Design.

SECTION 1

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS WHICH ARE NOT SIGNIFICANT OR WHICH HAVE BEEN MITIGATED TO A LEVEL OF INSIGNIFICANCE

All FEIR mitigation measures (as set forth in the Mitigation Monitoring Plan attached as Exhibit A to these findings) have been incorporated by reference into the conditions of approval for the conditional use permit. In addition, the conditions of approval for the oak tree permit and the vesting tentative tract map further mitigate the potential effects of the Revised Project Design.

The Board has determined that these mitigation measures and conditions of approval will result in a substantial mitigation of the effects of the Revised Project Design on earth resources, water resources, noise, land use planning issues, socioeconomics, fire protection, educational facilities, solid waste disposal, library resources, park and recreation facilities, public utilities (i.e., communications, electricity and natural gas), sewage disposal, water service, cultural resources and cumulative impacts on earth resources, water resources, noise, land use, parks, public utilities, sewage disposal, water service and cultural resources, and that these effects are not significant or have been mitigated to a level of insignificance.

(1) Earth Resources

Summary of Revised Project Design: Under a worst-case scenario, the Revised Project Design would result in an increase in the development area by approximately 123.6 acres when compared to the RPC Preferred Project and an increase in the development area by approximately 50.3 acres when compared to the proposed project. However, it is expected that the actual total acres of disturbance will be reduced because of limited grading in lots within Planning Area B where restrictions on grading would occur. The Revised Project Design also results in a reduction of approximately 4.3 million cubic yards of grading, as compared to the RPC Preferred Project and in a reduction of approximately 6.7 million cubic yards of grading as compared to the

proposed project. The Revised Project Design's grading plan reduces the grading in Planning Area B by approximately 50 percent, due to the larger lots situated in the canyon bottoms and surrounded by natural ridges. In Planning Area C, lot sizes and interior street alignments have been modified. Lots north of "G" Street have been increased from one-acre under the RPC Preferred Project to three - to five-acre lots. Perimeter circular streets "C" Drive and "D" Drive are in approximately the same location as previously proposed. Elevations of the large lots are at approximately the same elevations as depicted on the RPC Preferred Project site plan. Perimeter cut slopes have changed slightly to accommodate the larger lots. Structural setbacks from landslide areas to the northeast remain essentially unchanged.

There are no major changes in Planning Area A when compared to the RPC Preferred Project. The only significant changes are: the configuration of lots south and north of the school site, a storm drain and sewer easement at the intersection of "Y" Street and "CC" Street in the central portion of the Planning Area, and the redesign of "MM," "JJ," and "W" Streets.

Impacts of the Revised Project Design with respect to seismic activity and known onsite hazardous materials and soil contamination, will be similar to the impacts of the RPC Preferred Project and the proposed project.

Potential Effect: Implementation of the Revised Project Design will result, under a worst-case scenario, in the development of approximately 1,173.5 acres of the site; approximately 621.5 acres will remain undisturbed. No new areas of grading would occur under the Revised Project Design than were proposed under the RPC Preferred Project or the proposed project. Approximately 16.6 million cubic yards of grading, balanced onsite, will be required. The Draft EIR identified some geological constraints on the site including shallow slope failures and deep-seated landslide areas in the hilly areas of the site. As in the case of the proposed project and the RPC Preferred Project, the maximum cut slope will be 140+ feet with maximum vertical heights of 140+ feet, manufactured slopes will maintain a 2:1 or flatter gradient, and development will be set back from landslide areas. Potential impacts due to estimated seismic activity and known onsite hazardous materials and soil contamination could occur.

Finding: The FEIR concluded that implementation of proposed measures set forth in the project geotechnical reports will ensure the safety of future residents and that no impacts will occur to surrounding properties. Conditions of approval and features incorporated into the Revised Project Design will ensure the potential impacts identified in the FEIR remain at an insignificant level.

Facts: The above finding is made in that the following review process has occurred and appropriate measures will be made conditions of project approval so as to mitigate the identified impacts: During the subdivision review process for the project, the Department of Public Works required detailed investigation of soil, geologic structure, landslides, and expansive/compressive soils. These investigations included identification of unstable soils, previous landslides, and areas where development is infeasible. In complying with these standard practices and requirements of the Department of Public Works and the Uniform Building Code, most of the potential geologic/seismic/erosion concerns have been addressed and mitigated to a level that is considered less than significant. Preliminary investigations and analysis have identified areas where standard engineering techniques cannot provide adequate economically feasible mitigation for geologic concerns. The following measures are required in addition to the other standard measures required by the Department of Public Works:

Slope Stability/Landslides

1. During grading, subdrains shall be installed beneath compacted fill where fill is placed over drainage channels and hillside gullies, or in other areas where groundwater is encountered during grading. In addition, deep-rooted vegetation shall be planted on all cut slopes to reduce erosion. Proper drainage for manufactured slopes shall be provided to limit erosion of manufactured slopes. These measures will be effective in reducing slope hazards to less than significant levels.

2. Prior to approval of development permits, an engineering geologist and soils geologist shall assess rock faces and slopes within, and upslope of, areas proposed for development for potential instability. Prior to approval of grading permits, the proposed grading plan outlining remediation methods for the onsite landslides shall be approved by the Materials Engineering Division. During grading operations, a County Engineer shall conduct a field investigation to ensure that the remediation methods outlined in the grading plan are accomplished.

3. Prior to approval of the grading permits, in areas disturbed by grading, an engineering geologist shall evaluate steep slopes and swale areas upslope of proposed building pads for mudflow potential. If the potential for mudflow exists, diversion devices or recommendations of the engineering geologist shall be incorporated into the plans and/or loose soils shall be removed from the slopes and the slopes replanted. The design engineer shall submit the geologist's evaluation along with a proposal, if necessary, for design of

diversion devices to Los Angeles County Public Works, Materials Engineering Division, prior to approval of grading plans. If properly implemented, these measures will reduce the potential hazards from mudflow to a less than significant level.

4. The additional geotechnical review for the Revised Project Design which was conducted by GeoSoils, Inc. in April 1998, recommends that further detailed analysis of a landslide located south of Lots 899 and 900 and north of Lot 835 (in Planning Area B) be conducted during 40-scale engineering and remediation during grading.

Seismicity

5. If further investigations (i.e., during 40-scale grading plan review) indicate liquefaction potential in the alluvial areas, the following mitigation measure shall be implemented: prior to approval of a grading permit, a geotechnical report prepared by a registered engineer shall be prepared and submitted to the County Department of Public Works to identify specific construction methods to mitigate the potential for liquefaction. Such measures could include densification of loose alluvial soils or vibroflotation/vibroreplacement of loose soils, a technique that involves backfilling soils into a dense cylinder of compacted material capable of better supporting foundations. Either method of mitigation should be designed to avoid impacts to the Significant Ecological Area within San Francisquito Creek.

6. All cut and fill slopes, foundations, and structures shall be designed and constructed according to Chapter 70 of the Unified Building Code (UBC) and the Los Angeles County Grading Ordinance. Certain of the adobe buildings remaining onsite shall be retrofitted to California Office of Historic Preservation earthquake standards. The potential for significant exposure to earthquake hazards related to slope instability is expected to be relatively low if the above measures are properly implemented.

7. Prior to approval of grading plans, the project engineer shall demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Department of Building and Safety that the water quality basins have been designed to prevent a seiche from overflowing the basin berms.

Onsite Soil Contamination

1. Based on the preliminary investigation of contamination sources, no sources of significant concern were found. Some sources of contamination were identified and further investigation was recommended in the preliminary investigation. Therefore, to ensure the safety of construction workers and future residents, employees, and visitors of the project, the following shall be accomplished prior to approval of the grading permit:

   a. A Phase II environmental assessment shall be conducted at the project site to determine 1) if any soil contamination is present; 2) if so, the type of contaminant; 3) the vertical and horizontal extent of contamination, and 4) the concentration of contamination. Additionally, the landfill area will be investigated to determine the presence of hazardous materials. Implementation of a remedial action plan, if necessary, will be developed, approved by the State Department of Toxics, and implemented. Such a plan may include removal of the affected soils or in place remediation.

   b. If contaminated soils exist on site and are to be removed rather than treated in place, the applicant shall adhere to local, state, and federal regulations pertaining to the disposal of contaminated soils, including use of a certified hauler, disposal at an appropriate landfill (Class 1), and payment of all fees. All actions regarding transport and disposal shall be manifested as required by legislation.

   c. If contaminated soils exist on site and are to be treated in place rather than removed, the applicant shall implement treatment approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and permitted by the California State Department of Toxics.

(2) Water Resources

Summary of Revised Project Design: The Revised Project Design addresses many of the concerns raised during the CEQA review process regarding the amount of grading and development within the 100-year flood plain, through the elimination of the multi-family residential units from Planning Area D that were part of the proposed project. Potential impacts to surface water quality and groundwater quality will be reduced under the Revised Project Design as compared to those of the proposed project. As with the proposed project and the RPC Preferred Project, an extensive program of water quality lakes and/or other structural and non-structural measures will be implemented in the

project design in order to mitigate such impacts to a level that is considered less than significant. However, the Revised Project Design incorporates adjustments to the construction of flood proofing improvements associated with the construction of the recreation/sports complex in Area D that were not included in the proposed project or the RPC Preferred Project. These adjustments - construction of flood proofing measures in setback areas behind the natural streambanks - will ensure that changes to the hydrology of San Francisquito Creek will be the minimal feasible under the Revised Project Design.

Potential Effect: Implementation of the Revised Project Design will require grading activities resulting in slope modifications, modifications of tributaries to the San Francisquito, Wayside and Tapia Creeks, and modification or filling of minor drainages traversing the project site. Impacts associated with development activities include changes in absorption rates, drainage patterns and surface water runoff quality. Unmitigated grading and site preparation activities would increase the potential for erosion and sedimentation, which can impact aquatic and riparian habitats, as well as increase pollutant transport.

Finding: Conditions of approval and design features incorporated into the Revised Project Design will reduce the potential impact identified in the FEIR to an insignificant level.

Facts: The above finding is made in that the following measures will be made conditions of project approval so as to mitigate the identified impact:

Short Term Water Quality

1. The project owner or his designated general contractor will be responsible for filing a Notice of Intent (NOI) to be covered by the California General Permit for New Development (a variety of industrial permit) under the NPDES Stormwater Discharge Program. This NOI will be filed with the Los Angeles RWQCB at least 90 days prior to the onset of site grading. Compliance with terms of this permit will likely include the preparation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan, which includes elements of the construction site erosion control plan, and possibly a limited stormwater runoff monitoring program. This plan shall be prepared within six months of filing the NOI.

2. Prior to issuance of a grading permit, the project applicant shall submit to the Los Angeles County Public Works Department an erosion control program for its review and approval which indicates that proper control of siltation, sedimentation, and other pollutants will be implemented in accordance with the

Los Angeles County Grading Code. The use of filter fences, filter dikes, and other construction site Best Management Practices (BMPs) near stormwater system outlets shall be included in the program.

3. Sand bags shall be placed during construction to prohibit the transport of any onsite sediment and debris to downstream areas. Erosion control devices must be installed or in place at the conclusion of every working day during the rainy period of October 15 to April 15. These will be designed by the design engineer to keep all debris on the project site as mandated by county ordinances.

Long Term

4. Energy dissipaters will be installed at all offsite discharge locations to eliminate the hazard of erosion in natural offsite channel courses. These facilities will be designed to the satisfaction of the County Department of Public Works.

5. Subdrains as required by the geotechnical consultant will be installed.

6. All proposed cut-and-fill slopes shall be landscaped as soon as practicable after completion of grading to reduce potential erosion and increased runoff.

7. Implementation of source control BMPs, such as oil and grease traps for parking lots, clarifiers, or maintenance areas can be implemented through use of restrictive conditions, covenants, and restrictions (CC&Rs). Such CC&Rs shall be submitted to, and approved by, the Los Angeles County Regional Planning Department. Activities subject to the NPDES industrial permit process will be required to obtain the required permits and to supply applicable Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans and monitoring programs to the Regional Water Quality Control Board for approval.

8. The final design and specifications for the onsite water quality basins shall be approved by the County Department of Public Works and the Los Angeles RWQCB prior to their installation. All monitoring reports required by the Los Angeles RWQCB for continued operation of the basins shall also be submitted to the County Department of Public Works by the homeowners organization or landscape maintenance district, whichever is responsible for maintenance of the basins.

9. Floodproofing measures along San Francisquito Creek shall be designed and constructed in setback areas outside the flood plain boundary to ensure that no direct impacts to habitat of the unarmored threespine stickleback will occur.

(3) Noise

Summary of Revised Project Design: Noise associated with the Revised Project Design would be similar to the impacts associated with the RPC Preferred Project and proposed project as analyzed in the Draft EIR.

Potential Effect: Implementation of the Revised Project Design could result in both short-term (during construction) and long-term noise levels as a result of increases in traffic. Proposed residential development and the elementary school along Copper Hill Drive could potentially be exposed to traffic noise levels in exceedance of County noise standards.

Finding: Conditions of approval and features incorporated into the Revised Project Design will reduce the impact identified in the FEIR to an insignificant level.

Facts: The above finding is made in that the following measures will mitigate the identified impacts:

1. Construction activity shall be limited 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday, unless a permit for each work has first been issued by the Director of Public Works, or no noise-sensitive receptors (i.e., residential uses, schools, etc.) would be exposed to the construction noise.

2. Construction equipment and trucks shall be properly muffled.

3. Six-foot sound barrier walls shall be implemented for any residential structure and the elementary school (playground included) proposed within 493 feet of the centerline of Copper Hill Drive between Dickason Road and Decoro Drive. Landscaping shall be placed in front of walls to prevent graffiti.

4. For residential structures or classrooms within 159 feet of the Copper Hill Drive centerline, the State recommended 45 dBA CNEL interior noise levels for noise-sensitive uses, even with the recommended six-foot sound barrier walls, may be exceeded depending on actual design of the buildings. Upgrades on building facades facing Copper Hill Drive may be necessary to mitigate the interior noise level to 45 dBA CNEL or below. Double-pane

windows and weather-stripping or solid-core wood doors would help achieve this goal depending on each individual structure and distance from Copper Hill Drive travel lanes. Further site-specific noise study for each impacted residence or classroom shall be conducted to determine the necessary upgrades.

(4) Land Use

Summary of Revised Project Design: The Revised Project Design proposes generally the same land uses as the RPC Preferred Project and the proposed project, except that the Revised Project Design eliminates even more ridgeline development than the RPC Preferred Project and reduces the density of the proposed project and the amount of grading. As with the RPC Preferred Project and the proposed project, the Revised Project Design will require an amendment to the County's General Plan and Area Plan.

Potential Effect: Potential onsite land use compatibility issues are created by the existence of the Metropolitan Water District's aqueduct tunnel easement in Planning Area B and Southern California Edison Company's easement for power lines in Planning Area A. The existing General Plan and Area Plan designations for the Project site would allow a maximum of 1,109 dwelling units.

Finding: Conditions of approval, features incorporated into the Revised Project Design and approval of the requested General Plan and Area Plan amendments will reduce the impacts identified in the FEIR to an insignificant level.

Facts: The above finding is made in that the following measures will mitigate the identified impacts:

The Revised Project Design includes design features, such as a revegetation plan and a water quality system, that would facilitate the mitigation of land use compatibility conflicts/impacts. Presently, the Project is inconsistent with several policies of the general plan, including increased densities beyond that allowed under the existing land use designations. With the approval of the requested plan amendment, the Revised Project Design would be brought into consistency with the general plan. No amendment to population projections was deemed to be necessary by the Board since the increased population yield of the redesigned Revised Project Design can be considered part of the overage necessary to meet current projections. In addition, the following land use compatibility mitigation measures are required:

1. Prior to issuance of grading permits, the grading, drainage, and landscape plans of the proposed project shall be submitted for review and approval by the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.

2. No permanent structures shall be built within the Edison easement area.

3. Prior to any use of the soccer fields planned for the Edison easement on the site, signage shall be placed within the SCE easement area located in Planning Area A describing the potential for exposure to Electromagnetic fields (EMF) at that location. Signage shall be placed at the entrance/parking area for the proposed park uses and at regular intervals along the easement such that the signage is visible along the entire length of the easement.

4. If, at any time, the EMF exposure is scientifically proven to have adverse heath effects on humans at the levels produced onsite, the portion of the project with soccer fields will be abandoned from recreational activities and shall remain in open space in perpetuity.

(5) Socioeconomics

Summary of Revised Project Design: All of the Revised Project Design, the RPC Preferred Project and the proposed project are predominately residential communities and as such would decrease SCAG's projected future jobs/housing ratio for Regional Statistical Area 9. Because fewer dwelling units will be provided for the Revised Project Design than both the RPC Preferred Project and the proposed project, the incremental decrease would be less. However, considering that no changes are being made to housing or employment projections by the County at this time for the year 2010, jobs/housing ratios will remain theoretically unchanged with the Revised Project Design.

Potential Effect: At project build-out, the Revised Project Design would increase the number of residential dwelling units to 1,791, onsite population to 5,158 persons and permanent jobs associated with the project-serving shopping center to 104.

Finding: No significant impacts are anticipated as a result of Revised Project Design implementation.

Facts: The above finding is made for the following reasons:

1. No changes to housing and employment projections for the year 2010 are being made with the Revised Project Design. Increased housing yields on the subject site as a result of the Plan amendments can be considered part of the overage necessary to meet housing/population projections. In addition,

the increase in housing, population and employment growth associated with implementation of the Revised Project Design represents less than 3 percent of the housing and population growth and less than 1 percent of the employment growth for the Santa Clarita Valley, as projected by the Southern California Association of Governments ("SCAG"). Thus, the Revised Project Design would be consistent with SCAG's projections that the Santa Clarita area will continue to be housing-rich.

(6) Fire Protection

Summary of Revised Project Design: The Revised Project Design will result in less demand for fire services than both the RPC Preferred Project and the proposed project as analyzed in the Draft EIR due to less units.

Potential Effect: Implementation of the Revised Project Design may incrementally reduce the current level of fire services available in the Santa Clarita Valley through increased demand.

Finding: Conditions of approval and features incorporated into the Revised Project Design will mitigate the impact identified in the FEIR to an insignificant level.

Facts: The above finding is made in that the following measures will be made conditions of project approval in order to mitigate the identified impact:

1. All nonresidential facilities shall incorporate sprinkler systems.

2. This property is located within the area described by the County Forester and Fire Warden as Fire Zone 4, and must comply with all applicable code and ordinance requirements for construction, access, water mains, fire hydrants, and brush clearance.

3. The project will provide water mains, fire hydrants, and fire flow as required by the County Forester and Fire Warden for all land shown on the map to be recorded.

4. Access shall comply with Section 10.207 of the County Fire Code, which requires all-weather access. All-weather access will be provided. Emergency access to the satisfaction of the Fire Department shall be provided.

5. Fire Department access shall be extended to within 150 feet of any portion of habitable structures to be built.

6. Where driveways extend further than 300 feet and are of single access design, turnarounds suitable for fire protection equipment use shall be provided and shown on the final map. Turnarounds shall be designed, constructed and maintained to insure their integrity for Fire Department use. All weather paving shall be used for roadways. Where topography dictates, turnarounds shall be provided for driveways that extend over 150 feet.

7. Provide Fire Department and county-approved street signs and building address numbers prior to occupancy.

8. Brush clearance shall comply with the Los Angeles County Fire Code, Division V, Section 11.501 through Section 11.529.

9. Prior to construction a fire hazard reduction and fuel management plan shall be developed, reviewed by the Fire Department, and implemented. The plan shall include the following components:

   - A revised landscape plan replacing eucalyptus, pines, junipers, and cypress with other native trees.
   - Use of low-fuel volume plants, including sumac, toyon, elderberry, holly leaf, cherry, oak, sycamore, and California bay species.
   - Additional fuel modification zone with increased brush clearance for homes that face northeast open space areas.
   - Areas designated as open space shall not be utilized for equipment or vehicle storage or for access to the area of development. Such areas shall not be used for dumping of fill materials.

10. The applicant shall be required to pay a fee of $0.18 per square foot of structure or the prevailing rate as determined by the County of Los Angeles Fee Program for Fire Stations for the Benefit of the Consolidated Fire Protection. This fee program provides for the expansion of fire protection facilities.

11. The applicant shall dedicate a 4.3-acre site located in Planning Area B to the County Fire Department.

(7) Education

Summary of Revised Project Design: The Revised Project Design will generate approximately 388 fewer students than the RPC Preferred Project and 635 fewer students than the proposed project as analyzed in the Draft EIR.

Potential Effect: The Revised Project Design site lies within the borders of two elementary school districts: the Saugus Union School District and the Castaic Union School District, and one high school district, the William S. Hart High School District. The Revised Project Design is estimated to generate 448 students in the Saugus and Castaic Districts, and 144 junior high school and 286 senior high school students in the Hart District. The influx of new students into these districts is considered significant.

Finding: Conditions of approval and features incorporated into the Revised Project Design will reduce the impact identified in the FEIR to an insignificant level.

Facts: The above finding is made in that the Applicant has entered into School Facilities Funding Agreements with the Saugus and Hart school districts. These agreements stipulate the requirements that would serve to fully mitigate school impacts associated with the Revised Project Design in the absence of state funding. Impacts would therefore be mitigated to a level considered less than significant. The Applicant's mitigation responsibilities are summarized below:

Saugus Union School District

a) The property owner will provide and fund a new, permanent school for 647 students on the traditional, nine-month schedule, single-track program, with at least 30 percent relocatable classrooms. If the project's student generation exceeds school capacity, the property owner will pay an additional mitigation fee per dwelling unit in excess of 2,502 dwelling units. A 10.8-acre school site is reserved on the project site for the school. The school will be expendable to serve up to 776 students.

b) The property owner will fund the full costs to construct and, while waiting for the school district to pursue state funding, will lease the school site and facilities to the school district. The school district has an option to purchase the school site.

William S. Hart Union School District

a) The property owner will pay school fees agreed to between the school district and the property owner at the time of issuance of building permits.

b) The school district has reserved a potential junior high school site of approximately 20 acres within the project site, plus the provision of joint use of certain adjacent open space for physical education needs. As set forth in the Memorandum of Understanding between the property owner and school district, the school district has until September 1, 1999 to make a final determination to acquire the reserved school site. Absent such notice and commitment by the school district to acquire the site by September 1, 1999, the property owners would have the right to use the site for its originally proposed construction of 89 single-family detached dwelling units and a park site.

Other

a) The property owner has entered into a joint agreement between William S. Hart Union High School District, Saugus Union School District, and Castaic Union School District for the funding of School Facilities and Education Costs for any students that may reside in that portion of the project site which is located within the Castaic District boundaries. Both the Hart and Saugus school districts have agreed to interdistrict transfers to students within the Castaic school district boundary.

(8) Solid Waste Disposal

Summary of Revised Project Design: The Revised Project Design will generate approximately 1.49 tons per day less solid waste than the RPC Preferred Project and approximately 2.49 tons per day less solid waste than the proposed project and will generate less household hazardous waste than both the RPC Preferred Project and the proposed project as analyzed in the Draft EIR.

Potential Effect: The Revised Project Design is anticipated to generate an estimated 3.83 tons of solid waste per day. This represents approximately 0.3 percent of the daily disposal rate at the Chiquita Canyon Landfill and approximately 0.08 percent of the

Landfill's permitted capacity. The Project would also result in an increase in the amount of household hazardous waste generated on site.

Finding: Analysis in the FEIR indicates that no significant impact will occur as a result of the Revised Project Design alone on solid waste capacity considering overall state and county efforts to ensure waste disposal capacity along with reduction targets in the future. In addition, conditions of approval and features incorporated into the Revised Project Design will ensure the impact identified in the FEIR remains at an insignificant level.

Facts: The above finding is made in that the following measures will be made conditions of project approval so as to mitigate the identified impact:

1. Upon incorporation of the Homeowners Association (HOA), the HOA shall designate one board member as the waste management coordinator. This board member will coordinate all waste management activities for the HOA, including recycling, composting, and household hazardous waste collection.

2. Upon occupancy of the project, the homeowners organization shall incorporate the recycling services provided by the local waste hauler into any occupied residence. Commercial and school uses shall also provide recycling collection facilities and obtain recycling services in order to promote reduction of waste traveling to local landfills.

(9) Library

Summary of Revised Project Design: The Revised Project Design will increase demand for library services, although less than both the RPC Preferred Project and the proposed project as discussed in the Draft EIR.

Potential Effect: The increased demands for library services from the Revised Project Design is considered a potentially significant impact unless mitigated.

Finding: Conditions of approval will reduce the impact identified in the FEIR to an insignificant level.

Facts: The above finding is made in that the following measure will mitigate the identified impact:

1. As recommended by the County Public Library, the project developer shall enter into an agreement with the County Library to specify methods of

mitigation which could include the contribution of funds in order to compensate for the increase in population and increased demand for library services. Acceptance and implementation of the agreement with the County Library or payment of the library impact fee of up to $569.87 per dwelling unit, as specified in the December 21, 1998 Board Resolution relating to the library impact fee, is required.

(10) Parks and Recreation

Summary of Revised Project Design: Because of the reduction in residential development associated with the Revised Project Design, less park land will be required than under both the RPC Preferred Project and the proposed project. However, as part of the Revised Project Design, 27.2 acres of Planning Area D, previously proposed for residential development under the proposed project, will be developed with active recreational uses. Thus, the Revised Project Design will provide more onsite park land than the proposed project. In addition, the Revised Project Design would result in approximately 5,158 new residents at project buildout, a reduction of 2,048 residents when compared to the RPC Preferred Project and a reduction of 3,482 residents when compared to the proposed project. The Revised Project Design would generate the need for 15.07 acres of parkland. The Revised Project Design includes 61.8 acres of parks: 24.7 acres in Planning Area A, 9.9 acres in Planning Area C, and 27.2 acres in Planning Area D. Because the park in Planning Area A is within the Southern California Edison Company easement, the County has indicated that it will qualify for partial Quimby Act credit. Therefore, 20.7 acres of parkland would qualify for park credit, which will exceed the Revised Project Design's park requirements.

Potential Effect: Residents and users of the Revised Project Design site will generate the need for additional park facilities; approximately 15.07 acres would be required to meet the anticipated need of the Revised Project Design's residents.

Finding: Conditions of approval and features incorporated into the Revised Project Design will avoid the potential impact identified in the FEIR rendering it insignificant.

Facts: The above finding is made in that the following measures will mitigate the identified potential impact:

1. Prior to construction, the park obligations of the proposed project (15.07 acres) will be met by the project applicant. The amount and type of obligation, whether land dedication, payment of fees, or provision of amenities, will be determined by the County Parks and Recreation Department, prior to recordation of the final map.

2. Prior to construction, a trail easement for the San Francisquito Canyon trail shall be dedicated to the County Parks and Recreation Department. The design of improvements shall be the responsibility of the Parks and Recreation Department. Unless otherwise determined by the department, the trail shall be improved prior to the completion of Planning Area A.

(11) Communications, Electricity and Natural Gas

Summary of Revised Project Design: New telephone, electricity and natural gas service will be required, but reduced from both the RPC Preferred Project and the proposed project as analyzed in the Draft EIR.

Potential Effect: Telephone service is available to the Revised Project Design site. Buildout of the Revised Project Design will generate the need for approximately 11 million kilo-watt hours per year of electricity and approximately 9.9 million cubic feet per month of natural gas.

Finding: No significant impacts are anticipated as documented in the FEIR.

Facts: The above finding is made because telephone, electricity and natural gas facilities located in the vicinity of the Revised Project Design site can serve the site, and compliance by the Project with Title 24 energy conservation requirements will be required of all new structures as part of the standard construction and building permit issuance procedures.

(12) Sewage Disposal

Summary of Revised Project Design: The Revised Project Design will result in a reduction in the generation of sewage in comparison to both the RPC Preferred Project and the proposed project as analyzed in the Draft EIR.

Potential Effect: The Revised Project Design site will have to be annexed into the service boundaries of Los Angeles County Sanitation District Nos. 26 and 32 which jointly serve the Santa Clarita area by providing regional treatment service via the Santa Clarita Valley Joint Sewerage System. Project demand is expected to be approximately

0.4 million gallons per day at build out, which is equal to approximately 2 percent of the future maximum capacity of the system. Project plus existing plus related project demand at the time of Project build-out is anticipated to be 19.37 mgd. This demand can be met by the anticipated future capacity of 28.1 mgd planned for the years 1999 - 2000. The County Sanitation Districts have asserted a future capacity of 28.1 mgd as part of DMS reporting procedures. This capacity would be sufficient to handle estimated cumulative demand at buildout. The Districts are proceeding with a planned expansion in order to provide capacity to handle all anticipated demand within their service area.

Finding: Analysis in the Draft EIR concluded that sewage treatment capacity could potentially be deficient due to cumulative development by the year 2000. Since the Draft EIR was prepared, the County Sanitation Districts have updated their projections such that all cumulative demand will be accommodated. In addition, conditions of approval and features incorporated into the Revised Project Design will reduce the impact identified in the FEIR to an insignificant level.

Facts: The above finding is made in that the following will mitigate the identified impact:

1. Additional planned expansions of capacity will be built by the Sanitation Districts commencing in the year 1999.

2. Payment of sewage connection fees to the Sanitation Districts will help finance such expansion.

3. New sewer lines to service the Revised Project Design shall be constructed.

4. Building permits will not be issued unless adequate trunkline and sewage treatment capacity is available

(13) Water Service

Summary of Revised Project Design: The Revised Project Design will generate less demand for water service than both the RPC Preferred Project and the proposed project as discussed in the Draft EIR.

Potential Effect: The Revised Project Design, which is expected to generate an approximate total demand of 2,241 acre feet per year (AF/YR), is located partially within the wholesale service boundary of the Castaic Lake Water Agency and partially within or contiguous to the retail service boundaries of several providers, including the Newhall County Water District and the Valencia Water Company. Total Revised Project Design

demand would not cause an exceedance of the Valencia Water Company's delivery capacity of 35,800 AF/YR. The northerly portion of the site (i.e., a portion of Area B and all of Area C) would require annexation to the Castaic Lake Water Agency, including the provision of additional water supplies to that Agency required for annexation.

Finding: Analysis in the Draft EIR concludes that water is available from the Valencia Water Company using provider-supplied capacity information and County DMS criteria. Conditions of approval will ensure that potential impacts identified in the FEIR remain at an insignificant level.

Facts: The above finding is made in that the following measures will avoid the identified impact:

1. Prior to final map approval or the issuance of a grading permit, whichever occurs first, the Applicant shall provide proof of available water supply sufficient to meet the projected demand of the Revised Project Design. If water service is provided by a water purveyor other than the Valencia Water Company, it is likely that water transmission lines would require disturbance through natural areas. If this is to occur, further environmental analysis would be required.

(14) Cultural Resources

Summary of Revised Project Design: The Revised Project Design will result in fewer impacts to historic resources because more of the historic structures will be preserved/retained on the project site than with the proposed project.

Potential Effect: The Revised Project Design would potentially impact the former Harry Carey Ranch which is considered eligible for listing as a National Historic District on the National Register of Historic places.

Finding: Conditions of approval and features incorporated into the Revised Project Design will avoid the potential impact identified in the FEIR rendering it insignificant.

Facts: The above finding is made in that the following measures will mitigate the identified potential impact:

As part of the federal review process for the project, the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) will require a cultural report to be completed for the project pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended through 1992. This process requires consultation with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) and the

State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to develop a mitigation plan that reduces adverse effects on historic resources. The end product of the 106 process is a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) among the Corps, SHPO, which also provides consultation on the significance of historic resources, and the ACHP, with the permit applicant signing as a concurring party. The MOA will stipulate the mitigation measures, which are expected to follow federal standards and guidelines. The following measures can be expected in the MOA:

1. Preserve the main buildings, comprised of the main ranch house, Joe's cabin, and the bunk house.

2. Establish within the main buildings areas for structures to be relocated from within the property. The structures to be relocated would be the adobe, wood stables, and the smoke house.

3. Demolish the caretakers house and lower and upper garages. Building elements from these structures would be salvaged and reused in the restoration program for the structures to be preserved on the project site.

4. Historic American Building Survey (HABS) documenting buildings to be removed. This shall include photographic documentation of the buildings.

5. Implementation of an Interpretive Program which could include a detailed historic map of the ranch, placement of markers in locations of removed buildings, display of photographs and artifact exhibits in the retained historic structures, and slide shows of the ranch.

6. Archaeological monitoring during construction in sensitive areas with proper recording, evaluation and recovery of significant resources, if present.

7. Fencing of historic structures during grading to prevent accidental damage.

8. Sensitive landscaping to reduce impacts on the setting of the ranch, such as the use of native species (Mainland cherry).

9. Development of a preservation plan to retain the condition of buildings and prevent deterioration and vandalism.

(15) Biota

As discussed fully under Section 2 below, certain impacts of the Revised Project Design to biological resources can be mitigated to a level considered less than significant.

Cumulative Impacts

Summary of Revised Project Design: Cumulative impacts will be reduced to the extent that the underlying impacts of the Revised Project Design are less than those of both the RPC Preferred Project and the proposed project, as outlined above.

(1) Potential Effect: A number of development projects (the "related projects") are pending or approved in the vicinity of the Revised Project Design site. The effects of those projects, in conjunction with the Revised Project Design, on earth resources are not significant.

Finding: Conditions of approval and features incorporated into the Revised Project Design will avoid or substantially lessen the Revised Project Design's contribution to the potential effect identified in the FEIR. The cumulative impacts of related projects are not significant.

Facts: The above finding is made in that the measures set forth in Section 1 above will mitigate the Revised Project Design-related onsite earth resources impacts to a level that is considered less than significant. Some offsite grading for cut and fill slopes would be required, but no offsite properties would be adversely affected by development of the Revised Project Design. In addition, impacts to earth resources from related projects are not cumulatively significant since such impacts are site specific and require mitigation for project implementation.

(2) Potential Effect: A number of related projects are pending or approved in the vicinity of the Revised Project Design site. The effects of those projects, in conjunction with the Revised Project Design, could have a significant cumulative impact on water resources.

Finding: Conditions of approval and features incorporated into the Revised Project Design will avoid or substantially lessen the Revised Project Design's contribution to the potential effect identified in the FEIR. The cumulative impacts of related projects are not significant.

Facts: Of the related projects identified in the FEIR, several are proposed within the San Francisquito Canyon watershed. No projects are proposed within Tapia, Wayside, Charlie or the unnamed watersheds occurring on the site. Although related projects within the watershed could affect the quality and velocity of flows within San

Francisquito Creek, the Revised Project Design has been designed so that post-development conditions are less. Since the Revised Project Design would not represent a significant change in the quantity or quality of flow in the creek, its contribution to cumulative impacts would be negligible. Other projects can be expected to be similarly conditioned such that no significant cumulative impacts would occur.

(3) Potential Effect: A number of related projects are pending or approved in the vicinity of the Revised Project Design site. The effects of those projects, in conjunction with the Revised Project Design, could have a significant cumulative impact on noise.

Finding: Conditions of approval and features incorporated into the Revised Project Design will avoid or substantially lessen the Project's contribution to the potential effect identified in the FEIR. The cumulative impacts of related projects are not significant.

Facts: The above finding is made in that the measures set forth in Section 1 above will mitigate the Revised Project Design-related onsite and offsite noise impacts to a level that is considered less than significant. However, new offsite residential development along major arterials in the Project vicinity, such as McBean Parkway, Copper Hill Drive and Newhall Ranch Road, would potentially be exposed to high traffic noise levels. Sound barrier walls and/or building upgrades may be necessary to mitigate the anticipated excessive traffic noise. Further site-specific noise studies would be conducted to determine the necessary upgrades during the environmental review stage of the projects located along these roadways. Other projects can be expected to be similarly conditioned such that no significant cumulative impacts would occur.

(4) Potential Effect: A number of related projects are pending or approved in the vicinity of the Revised Project Design site. The effects of those projects, in conjunction with the Revised Project Design, would not have a significant cumulative impact on land use.

Finding: Conditions of approval and features incorporated into the Revised Project Design will avoid or substantially lessen the Project's contribution to the potential effect identified in the FEIR. The cumulative impacts of related projects are not significant.

Facts: Of the related projects identified in the FEIR, five projects occur within close proximity to the site, while most do not. Each of the related projects has or will undergo its own consistency analysis with applicable plans and policies. As discussed in the FEIR, the Revised Project Design is expected to be consistent and compatible with the other proposed uses. The extent of development occurring in the immediate project area illustrates the expansion of urban development north of the City of Santa Clarita. While

the Revised Project Design would develop urban uses in close proximity to the National Forest and other natural open spaces, other development has been built closer to the National Forest boundary. The Revised Project Design can be considered an extension of the urban boundary that currently exists just south and east of the project's boundary.

(5) Potential Effect: A number of related projects are pending or approved in the vicinity of the Revised Project Design site. The effects of those projects, in conjunction with the Revised Project Design, could have a significant cumulative impact on parks.

Finding: Conditions of approval and features incorporated into the Revised Project Design will avoid or substantially lessen the Revised Project Design's contribution to the potential effect identified in the FEIR. The cumulative impacts of related projects are not significant.

Facts: The above finding is made in that the features incorporated into the Revised Project Design and the measures set forth in Section 1 above will mitigate the Revised Project Design-related park impacts to a level that is less than significant. Each of the related projects will also be required to meet their individual park requirements so as to avoid any significant cumulative impact on existing parks.

(6) Potential Effect: A number of related projects are pending or approved in the vicinity of the Revised Project Design site. The effects of those projects, in conjunction with the Revised Project Design, will generate the need for communication services, more electricity and more natural gas.

Finding: Conditions of approval and features incorporated into the Revised Project Design will avoid or substantially lessen the Project's contribution to the potential effect identified in the FEIR. The cumulative impacts of related projects are not significant.

Facts: Cumulative impacts from the Revised Project Design, together with related projects, will not have a significant impact on the ability of Pacific Bell Telephone Company to provide communication service, on the ability of Southern California Edison to provide electrical service (even though the cumulative impacts to electrical consumption are estimated in the FEIR to be 11 million kWh of electricity per year) or on the ability of Southern California Gas Company to provide natural gas service (even though the cumulative impacts to natural gas consumption are estimated in the FEIR to be 9.9 million cubic feet of natural gas per month).

(7) Potential Effect: A number of related projects are pending or approved in the vicinity of the Revised Project Design site. The effects of those projects, in conjunction

with the Revised Project Design, could have a significant cumulative impact on sewage treatment services and facilities. Specifically, cumulative projects, together with the Revised Project Design, would generate 28.1 mgd of sewage by the year 2010. The planned capacity of the Santa Clarita Valley Joint Sewerage System ("SCVJSS") for the year 2010 is 28.1 mgd. Thus, no deficit could potentially occur.

Finding: Conditions of approval and features incorporated into the Revised Project Design will avoid or substantially lessen the Revised Project Design's contribution to the potential effect identified in the FEIR. The cumulative impacts of related projects are not significant.

Facts: The above finding is made in that the features incorporated into the Revised Project Design and the measures set forth in Section 1 above will mitigate the Revised Project Design-related sewage impacts to a level that is less than significant. Furthermore, since the County Sanitation Districts have indicated an expansion to 28.1 mgd by 2010, as part of DMS reporting, additional cumulative sewage could be treated. Cumulative demand, including the Revised Project Design, by the year 2010 would generate 26.55 mgd, which is 1.55 mgd below the system's capacity. Future expansions are, thus, feasible and could be met through the payment of fees by all related projects which would offset potential deficiencies to the SCVJSS.

(8) Potential Effect: A number of related projects are pending or approved in the vicinity of the Revised Project Design site. The effects of those projects, in conjunction with the Revised Project Design, could have a significant cumulative impact on water supply.

Finding: Conditions of approval and features incorporated into the Revised Project Design will avoid or substantially lessen the Revised Project Design's contribution to the potential effect identified in the FEIR. The cumulative impacts of related projects are not significant.

Facts: Cumulative water impacts have been determined using the Department of Regional Planning's Development Monitoring System. According to the DMS analysis, cumulative water demand for the Valencia Water Company is 10,778 AF/YR, which includes the Revised Project Design. Existing plus cumulative demand (17,655 AF + 10,778 AF = 28,433 AF) would be less than the water company's current supply of 35,800 acre-feet per year.

(9) Potential Effect: A number of related projects are pending or approved in the vicinity of the Revised Project Design site. The effects of those projects, in conjunction

with the Revised Project Design, could have a significant cumulative impact on cultural resources.

Finding: Conditions of approval and features incorporated into the Revised Project Design will avoid or substantially lessen the Project's contribution to the potential effect identified in the FEIR. The cumulative impacts of related projects are not significant.

Facts: Because the historic resources identified at the Revised Project Design site are limited to the site boundaries, the implementation of the related projects listed in the FEIR would not cumulatively affect the resources present at the site. The Revised Project Design site does not contribute to the context of offsite historic or archaeological resources; thus, the development of the Revised Project Design would not cumulatively impact any unknown offsite resources. In addition, all related projects can be expected to be required to comply with cultural resource policies and to implement mitigation measures.

SECTION 2

SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS WHICH CANNOT BE MITIGATED TO A LEVEL OF INSIGNIFICANCE

The County has determined that, although FEIR mitigation measures, design features included as part of the Revised Project Design and conditions of approval imposed on the Revised Project Design will provide a substantial mitigation of the following effects, these effects cannot be feasibly or effectively mitigated to a level of insignificance. Consequently, in accordance with Section 15093 of the State CEQA Guidelines, a Statement of Overriding Considerations has been prepared (see Section 6) to substantiate the County's decision to accept these unavoidable substantial, adverse environmental effects because of the benefits afforded by the Revised Project Design.

(1) Biota

Summary of Revised Project Design: Implementation of the Revised Project Design will result in impacts to biological resources throughout most of the project site which are very similar to those of the RPC Preferred Project. Adjustments to the approach to providing flood proofing for development edges along the natural stream bank in Planning Area D, would reduce these impacts to less than significant levels. The remainder of the impacts to biological resources, including the loss of habitat and direct and indirect impacts to plant and wildlife species, are essentially the same as those from the RPC Preferred Project and the proposed project. Additionally, the lot line

adjustments recommended for lots adjacent to Wayside and Tapia Canyons would ensure that the indirect impacts from human activities on these large rural residential lots are reduced to the lowest level feasible. The beneficial indirect impact from the possible elimination of existing or future at-grade stream crossings through SEA 19 would be retained under the Revised Project Design, similar to the RPC Preferred Project.

Potential Effect: Development of the Revised Project Design will impact approximately 1,173.5 acres of plant communities within the 1,795-acre site. Thirty Four (34) oak trees would be impacted. Portions of the riparian vegetation, Coastal Sage Scrub, cherry woodland and oak woodland would be significantly impacted. The loss of Chaparral and Coastal Sage Scrub habitats onsite will reduce available habitat for several sensitive wildlife species. Wildlife movement across the site would be interrupted. Unavoidable significant impacts of the Project after implementation of feasible mitigation measures are as follows: loss of onsite Chaparral, interruption of wildlife movement across the site, and indirect impacts to the SEA.

Finding: Certain of the impacts to biological resources identified in the FEIR cannot be found to be mitigated to a level of insignificance. However, conditions of approval and features incorporated into the Revised Project Design will reduce, to the extent feasible, or avoid such identified, as well as potential, significant environmental effects. All other impacts to biological resources will be rendered insignificant through conditions of approval and features incorporated into the Revised Project Design.

Facts: The above finding is made in conjunction with a Statement of Overriding Considerations which is simultaneously being adopted for the Revised Project Design (see Section 6) and in that the following measures will either partially or fully mitigate the identified impacts:

The Revised Project Design includes the preservation of approximately 603.4 acres of undisturbed natural areas (approximately 34 percent of the site) which includes approximately 73.4 acres of the SEA. An additional 18.1 acres of land in undeveloped areas of the site would be devoted to riding/hiking/equestrian trails and natural fuel modification zones. In addition, approximately 85 acres of the site would be devoted to passive parks and revegetated slopes, which would contain natural habitats that could be used by wildlife.

Open Space

The Applicant proposes to dedicate approximately 73.4 acres of subdivided undeveloped land for open space to the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, or to an

agency acceptable to the County of Los Angeles and the applicant that would take title to the land. In order to avoid potential impacts to wildlife in the natural open space areas on the site from construction of the project, the following measures will be implemented:

1. The limits of grading will be clearly marked on each parcel. All areas required for storage of equipment, stockpile areas, turnarounds, and site access will be within the limits of grading. No work will occur outside of the identified construction site.

2. Erosion control measures, such as temporary berms, sandbagging, and desiltation basins, will be in place during all phases of construction and will be regularly maintained. All cut, graded, or filled slopes should be landscaped as soon as possible with the appropriate native species (see below) in order to diminish the potential for erosion problems.

3. Signage will be developed and placed along the boundaries of preserved natural open space areas to discourage recreational vehicles from entering these areas.

4. All landscaping, both within common open space areas and within individual lots, shall be restricted so as to exclude invasive non-native plant species. A list of restricted species shall be approved by the County's biologist prior to the issuance of grading permits.

Sensitive Species

Unarmored Threespine Stickleback

The following recommendations combine management practices for water quality enhancement of urban runoff with measures for controlling increased runoff quantity to avoid direct and indirect impacts on the unarmored threespine stickleback. The following is a summary of these recommendations. A detailed discussion of these measures is included in Technical Appendix C of the FEIR.

A water quality control program has been designed that uses point source controls to minimize pollutant discharge into onsite drainages; and that employs structural systems to capture first flush storm runoff and nuisance flows prior to surface runoff reaching San Francisquito Canyon Wash.

Water quality control measures incorporated into the program include the following:

1. Detailed drainage studies of the project area.

2. Development and management of five water quality basins, to be filled year-round with water, to catch and remove urban pollutants from water runoff. Mosquito fish are not to be used for mosquito abatement due to the related impacts on the stickleback.

3. Development of a monitoring program for baseline water quality and the effectiveness of the water quality basins.

4. Designs for efficient landscaping practices to reduce the amount of impervious surfaces.

5. Provisions for overall control, maintenance, and monitoring responsibilities.

6. Development of an eradication program for undesirable non-native invasive plant and animal species associated with the water quality in the basins.

Construction, erosion, and sedimentation measures to reduce impacts during construction of the property include the following:

1. Develop a siltation basin plan and employing siltation basins during construction.

2. Employ filter fences, trash racks, and other devices in stormwater outlets.

3. Limit construction in or near San Francisquito Canyon Wash to the non-rainy season.

4. Employ Best Management Practices, such as storm drain maintenance, street sweeping, and litter control, to reduce the amount of pollutants from urbanized areas potentially affecting San Francisquito Canyon.

5. Construction of any bridge crossing on San Francisquito Creek should be undertaken during the non-rainy season when the creek is normally dry. However, it is acknowledged that there are occasional above-average rainfall years that result in flowing water beyond the rainy season. Should bridge construction be undertaken in such a year, water would need to be directed via a culvert (or similar structure) to bypass the construction area. The following procedure would be used for such a bypass operation:

- Preconstruction survey for unarmored threespine stickleback by a qualified biologist holding a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service permit to handle the unarmored threespine stickleback.
- Placement of a block net or silt screen at the upstream end of the proposed diversion.
- Installation of a bypass culvert (18-inch diameter or greater).
- Removal of the block net or silt screen.
- Complete bridge construction.
- Placement of a block net or silt screen at the upstream end of the proposed diversion.
- Removal of bypass culvert.

This program will mitigate most of the potential impacts to water quality in San Francisquito Canyon Creek to a level considered less-than-significant. In addition, to avoid potential impacts on the stickleback as a result of dewatering of natural groundwater basins, the use of existing groundwater aquifers will be limited to the historic rate of withdrawal as set forth in the Draft EIR.

Peirson's Morning Glory

Preconstruction surveys for Peirson's morning glory will be conducted during the flowering season (May through June) to determine if the plant is present within the proposed grading area. If the plant is present, the locations would be staked. During the wet season (November through February), Peirson's morning glory plants potentially impacted by proposed grading will be transferred to suitable habitat areas that are designated for long-term preservation. Plants will be collected by first removing the stems to a length of 5 inches (to reduce transpiration) and then collecting the root ball by digging up at least 6 inches of soil around each root ball. If the transplanting program is not successful, then a seed propagation program in an approved location (as determined by CDFG and the County) will be considered. As a caution, seeds will be collected from plants on the site, during the appropriate season prior to proposed grading, for possible use in a propagation program. Implementation of this program will mitigate any potential impacts on Peirson's morning glory to a level considered less than significant.

Special Status Reptiles

To reduce the amount of mortality on two sensitive lizards, the San Diego coast horned lizard and coastal western whiptail, a catch-and-release program is proposed. Prior to commencement of construction, a catch-and-release plan to salvage individuals of San Diego coast horned lizard and coastal western whiptail will be implemented. This salvage technique is recommended because lizards are not as mobile as birds and mammals and, after relocation, may not wander as far in search of familiar territory. However, this program is unproven and should be viewed as experimental. Follow-up studies would need to be conducted to determine the success of such a program. The salvage program will be conducted during the active season for these species (March through October). Individual coastal western whiptails will be captured using the pit trapping technique and coast horned lizards will be captured by the same method and enhanced by hand-captures. The lizards will be released in the areas of suitable habitat (most likely in the natural open space preserves of Planning Areas B and C) on the site and, as determined by CDFG or USFWS biologists and the County, that are designated for long-term preservation. Preferred locations will be those habitats that may be underpopulated or unoccupied by these species, as determined by site-specific surveys of preserve areas prior to construction, possibly due to past activities, including agriculture, grazing, and over collection. This program will be conducted by a qualified herpetologist deemed acceptable to the County biologist. While this program may mitigate the impact to these species to some extent, the loss of occupied habitat, and habitat potentially supporting other special-status reptiles, is still considered a significant impact.

Special Status Birds

Because specific mitigation measures, such as trapping and relocating birds (i.e., Bell's sage sparrow), are considered infeasible for these highly mobile vertebrates, and the loss of approximately 839 acres of suitable habitat cannot be mitigated to a level less than significant, the loss of habitat would be considered a significant unavoidable impact.

Nesting Raptors

The following mitigation measures are recommended to avoid impacts to nesting raptors.

1. To avoid impacts to the red-tailed hawk nest in the southeastern portion of the property, prior to commencing construction activities within 1,000 feet of the known nesting location, a raptor specialist would be retained to determine if the nest is still active. If the nest is active, construction activities will be prohibited within 1,000 feet of the nest site during the

breeding season (February to June). This nest site would be preserved as part of the project design in all alternatives under consideration. This nest site is currently located adjacent to an occupied residence and near the existing alignment of San Francisquito Canyon Road. There are no anticipated direct impacts on this species.

2. Suitable nesting habitat exists for several other raptor species. A raptor specialist shall be retained to complete pre-construction surveys in all suitable nesting habitat for raptors to determine if active nests are present. Pre-construction surveys will be completed between January and June in the breeding season that precedes ground-disturbing activities within 1,500 feet of suitable nesting habitat. Where active nests are encountered, construction activities would be prohibited during the breeding season (from January to September depending on which species is identified). Nest trees that are identified in the grading areas will be removed during the non-breeding season.

Impacts to raptor nests can be mitigated to a level considered less than significant with implementation of these measures.

Jurisdictional Drainages

Project implementation will impact approximately 3 acres of drainages considered waters of the United States. The discharge of dredged or fill material into these areas is subject to the jurisdiction of the ACOE, pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, and may require a Nationwide Permit.

The project proponent will coordinate with the ACOE prior to construction to secure a Section 404 Clean Water Act permit and will abide by the conditions of any executed permit. Measures to mitigate (to a level that is less than significant) fill impacts on jurisdictional drainages would be included in the conditions of the permit, and typically require the restoration or replacement of lost drainages on a 1:1 acre basis.

Riparian Vegetation

Riparian habitat is limited to scattered patches of mulefat around an artificial cattle pond and a sparse cover of mulefat in the areas designated as Canyon B and Canyon C in the jurisdictional delineation report. In addition, scattered individual cottonwoods occur along the eastern portion of the property adjacent to San Francisquito Canyon wash A total of approximately 0.5 acre of cottonwood-willow riparian woodland scrub habitat

would be removed. Due to the regional scarcity of these resources and their value as wildlife habitat, even the loss of approximately 0.5 acre of riparian vegetation is considered a significant impact requiring mitigation.

In conjunction with the comments offered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and USDA Forest Service, potential locations for riparian mitigation have been aligned along San Francisquito Canyon. Riparian revegetation along San Francisquito Canyon accomplishes two objectives: (1) it mitigates impacts on riparian habitat, and (2) enhances the migratory corridor along San Francisquito Canyon for the unarmored threespine stickleback.

The Applicant intends to mitigate for impacts on mulefat scrub and southern cottonwood/willow riparian habitat through revegetation in and adjacent to San Francisquito Canyon Wash, near the northern and southern portions of the property. Mitigation will be accomplished in the San Francisquito Canyon Wash portion of the property. A list of replacement species and performance criteria is included in Table C-2 in Technical Appendix C of the FEIR. A summary of these measures follows:

1. Mitigation for impacts will consist of planting a total of 1.0 acre of cottonwood, willows, and appropriate riparian understory species. Mitigation will be accomplished in the following areas: (1) onsite northern portion of San Francisquito Canyon Wash on the western margin of the Wash; and (2) southern portion of San Francisquito Canyon Wash; planting to be accomplished parallel to Planning Area D along the eastern margin of the Wash.

2. Revegetation will be accomplished through the use of a mix of native riparian-associated trees such as cottonwoods, willows, and associated understory species (see Table C-2, Technical Appendix C, for number and density). Taller tree species will be interspersed with lower-growing understory species to create a variety of habitat types and structures that will enhance the functional integrity of the created habitat areas.

3. The performance goal for the revegetation sites is 100 percent survival of the trees planted 5 years after the date of planting. Total cover over the revegetated riparian habitat shall equal 50 percent or greater at 5 years after planting. Revegetation can be accomplished through use of various sized materials. Replanting will take place, as necessary, to ensure 100 percent survival of tree species. Performance criteria for the riparian mitigation program is summarized in Table C-3, Technical Appendix C.

4. The mitigation area must be dedicated in perpetuity as wildlife habitat and monitored for the first 5 years to ensure successful implementation. A deed restriction or conservation easement is usually required by the CDFG to ensure permanent preservation of the area for wildlife habitat.

5. After the initial planting has been completed, all the mitigation sites will be monitored monthly for the first year, and quarterly for the following 4 years, or as long as needed to monitor survival of replacement trees to the age of 5 years after planting.

6. A monitoring program that includes the standard sampling and monitoring protocol as described in this report, will be conducted for the mitigation program for riparian resources. The annual monitoring reports will continue for at least a period of five years or until the restoration biologist and County biologist agree that a level of vegetation cover and species richness comparable to the existing vegetation, as based on a preconstruction survey, has been reached.

With implementation of this program, the impact on riparian habitat can be mitigated to a level considered less than significant.

Coast Live Oak Resources

A number of measures have been developed to mitigate the loss of oak resources on the project site. A detailed oak tree mitigation plan can be found in Technical Appendix C of the FEIR. A summary of this plan follows.

The oak tree mitigation program involves the replacement of the 34 oak trees (*Quercus agrifolia*) that will be lost as a result of the project, in accordance with the provisions of Los Angeles County Code Title 22, and the protection of oaks to be preserved as part of the project site plan. Oak tree mitigation measures included the following:

1. The replacement of lost oaks (coast live oak) at a 2:1 ratio with 15-gallon stock measuring 1 inch in diameter at 1 foot above the base at pre-determined locations adjacent to existing oaks.

2. The preservation of approximately 200 oaks on the project site.

3. Guidelines to ensure avoidance or minimization of impacts on preserved oak woodlands during construction-related activities.

4. Guidelines to minimize disturbance to the remaining oak woodlands from human and urban-related activities and encroachment.

5. Development of a monitoring program agreed upon by the County (see Technical Appendix C for details of the proposed monitoring program).

This program will mitigate the impact on oak trees to a level considered less than significant.

Mainland Cherry Forest Resources

1. In an effort to reduce the amount of impact on mainland cherry forest caused by project implementation, approximately 7 acres representing 29 percent of this resource on the project site will be preserved as designated open space onsite. The preservation area is in Wayside Canyon.

2. Measures to avoid or minimize construction impacts on cherry trees will be the same guidelines as those described for avoidance or minimization of impacts on preserved oaks (see oak resources above). The proximity of development to the preserved cherry woodlands will increase the amount of long-term disturbance to the habitat in much the same manner as described for oak resources. Guidelines to minimize disturbance to the preserved cherry woodlands will be the same as those for minimizing disturbance to the preserved oak woodland habitats (see oak resources above).

3. To compensate for the removal of approximately 17 acres of cherry woodland, a revegetation program will be implemented. Cherry woodland shall be replaced at 1:1 acre ratio using 5-gallon or larger stock of *Prunus ilicifolia*. These shall be planted at a density of no less than 50 trees per acre. Replacement trees shall include a range of age classes to allow for a more diverse population. Revegetation locations will include the open areas between clumps of preserved cherry trees in Wayside Canyon.

4. A monitoring program that includes the standard sampling and monitoring protocol (see Technical Appendix C) will be conducted for the mitigation program for mainland cherry forest. The annual monitoring reports will continue for at least a period of 5 years or until the restoration biologist and County biologist agree that a level of vegetation cover and species richness comparable to the existing vegetation, as based on a preconstruction survey, has been reached.

Implementation of the above mitigation measures will reduce impacts on mainland cherry forest to a level considered less than significant.

Venturan Coastal Sage Scrub Resources

1. The graded areas surrounding the development will consist of 79.9 acres of manufactured slopes to be managed as open space. Manufactured slopes, located outside of fuel modification areas, can be revegetated with coastal sage scrub species to mitigate for coastal sage scrub and chamise chaparral removal. The three methods of revegetation that could be used are hydro-seed method, planting of nursery stock, and the "native regrowth" method. The methodology used will depend on the specific location for revegetation, and as determined by the restoration specialist and the County.

    a. In areas that are appropriate for the native regrowth method, topsoil (the top 4 to 6 inches) and vegetative material from the coastal sage scrub vegetation that will be removed will be collected (prior to grading), shredded, and stockpiled (for a period not to exceed 3 months). Following grading, the stored soil and shredded material will then be spread over the revegetation areas and tamped in by means of a sheepsfoot roller or similar device.

    b. In areas that will be hydroseeded, a mix of species will be used that includes a cover crop (a quickly growing species that will keep weeds down). Species to be used include laurel sumac, black sage, white sage, purple sage, California buckwheat, and California sagebrush. See Table C-4, Technical Appendix C for a complete list of species, size, and amount/acre. Hydroseeding will be conducted in the late fall to late winter season.

    c. In Planning Area C of the project site, where the existing vegetation is chamise chaparral with coastal sage scrub elements, the revegetation areas should be planted with nursery-stock chamise, and coastal sage scrub plants, as indicated above.

2. A monitoring program that includes the standard sampling and monitoring protocol as described in the FEIR (see Technical Appendix C), will be conducted for the mitigation program for coastal sage scrub. The annual monitoring reports will continue for at least a period of five years or until the restoration biologist and County biologist agree that a level of

vegetation cover and species richness comparable to the existing vegetation, as based on a preconstruction survey, has been reached.

Implementation of the above mitigation measures will reduce impacts on coastal sage scrub to a level considered less than significant.

Riversidean Alluvial Fan Sage Scrub Resources

In order to mitigate for the removal of approximately 12 acres of Riversidean alluvial fan sage scrub habitat, replacement and enhancement on a 1:1 basis will be required onsite. The areas for mitigation will include existing habitat areas in the northern and southern onsite portions of San Francisquito Canyon Wash. Specific locations for mitigation of alluvial scrub habitat will be determined in cooperation with the California Department of Fish and Game and the County biologist; these locations will likely include the existing terraces along both sides of the creek. Appropriate delineation and mapping of these areas will be prepared and submitted to the County biologist. The following performance criteria will be required to ensure proper mitigation and survivability:

1. Prior to any clearing or grading operations on the project site, seeds, cuttings, and transplants of alluvial scrub species will be collected during the appropriate season and planted or stored for later installation on the mitigation site.

    a. Cuttings will be taken from an appropriate variety of onsite alluvial scrub species during the late winter and early spring, then rooted in flats, liners or 1-gallon containers.

    b. Seed will be collected during the late spring or early summer from as many onsite species and as many individuals as feasible. Seeds from individual species will be cleaned and stored separately.

    c. Appropriately sized shrubs that constitute natural components of the alluvial scrub habitat and lie within areas that will be affected by grading activities will be excavated with their root balls intact, stored, and replanted as soon as possible.

2. Site preparation for the alluvial scrub revegetation area will occur after flood control improvements have been completed. Topsoils removed by grading in alluvial scrub habitat will be distributed on the revegetation site.

3. A temporary irrigation system will be installed and tested prior to implementation of the proposed revegetation plan.

4. Planting will be performed, primarily during the cooler, wetter months, between November 15 and April 15, immediately following a rain of at least 1/2 inch. Newly planted and seeded alluvial scrub will be maintained (including weed control and erosion control) for a 3-year period beginning with the initiation of planting.

5. A monitoring program that includes the standard sampling and monitoring protocol (see Technical Appendix C) will be conducted for the mitigation program for alluvial scrub. The annual monitoring reports will continue for at least a period of five years or until the restoration biologist and County biologist agree that a level of vegetation cover and species richness comparable to the existing vegetation, as based on a preconstruction survey, has been reached.

Implementation of the above mitigation measures will reduce impacts to Riverside an alluvial fan sage scrub resources to a level considered less than significant.

Wildlife Movement

The wildlife corridor system proposed in the project design will consist of preserved portions (between Planning Areas B and C) of the existing ridgeline corridor and some secondary drainage corridors with a proposed hiking trail network to connect the preserved portions. This will primarily serve to connect the remaining open spaces (within Planning Areas B and C) that have been fragmented by project implementation and allow wildlife to move north/south and west from the Angeles National Forest through the project site and west to Wayside Canyon. This trail network will consist of existing trails that will be minimally upgraded. The proposed hiking trails may be used by wildlife that would normally use the existing ridgeline corridor because it will have topography that is similar to the existing condition. The existing ridgeline corridor is a man-made feature (fuel break), and the proposed trails also will be man-made.

All of the over-road type intersections will be a minimum of 250 feet wide and will be revegetated with native plants following the guidelines for fuel modification zones in Technical Appendix C.

The following general guidelines will be incorporated into all bridge designs over San Francisquito Creek in order to facilitate wildlife movement:

1. The bottom of the crossing will be no less than 20 feet wide, and the distance from the ground to the bottom of the bridge should be no less than approximately 15 feet in height.

2. The roadway bridge will have an opening in the middle to allow light to come through.

3. For those crossings that are at a minimum of 20 feet in width, the crossing will be shaped like an hour glass, with the greatest constriction in the middle and the sides flaring out at either end. This design is intended to minimize the length of the narrowest section of the crossing under the bridge. The flaring will begin as close to the center of the roadway bridge as possible.

Wildlife movement corridor/road intersections that involve road undercrossings will be constructed using the "openness effect" concept developed by Reed et al. (Envicom Corp. 1992). This concept involves the use of a formula for determining the dimensions of an underpass. The surface area of the opening to the underpass is assumed to be elliptical with the width greater than the height. The length of the underpass should be the same as the width of the roadway and use the same hourglass shape as described above for bridge crossings. To apply the concept, the following formula is calculated:

> 1/2 width (in meters) x 1/2 height (in meters) x 3.14 = surface area of culvert opening; Surface area of culvert opening/length (in meters) of culvert = openness effect

An openness effect ratio of at least 0.6 should be obtained. The width, height, and length must be measured in meters, or the 0.6 ratio will not apply.

Additional measures to reduce impacts on wildlife movement include:

1. All project fencing in perimeter areas shall be open in design to allow wildlife movement. Chain-link fences or other types of fences that may form a barrier shall be prohibited.

2. Low-intensity street lamps at the edge of development, low-height poles, and shields of internal silvering of the light globe or external opaque reflectors will be used. The degree to which these lighting measures are incorporated should be dependent upon the distance of the light source from the edge of development.

3. The use of hiking trails shall be restricted to the daylight hours between dawn and dusk.

4. Design criteria, to the satisfaction of the California Department of Fish and Game and the County Biologist, shall be included in the final tract map for each parcel that contains a wildlife corridor crossing prior to construction. The specifications shall include illustrations of the crossings (plan view and cross-section), heights and widths, and re-vegetation species.

5. During the environmental review of the Revised Project Design, an additional mitigation measure was recommended to reduce potential impacts to wildlife movement. This measure requires that lot boundaries of privately owned lots in areas like those adjacent to Tapia and Wayside Canyons be adjusted during preparation of 40-scale (1"=40`) subdivision and grading plans so as to reduce the lot dimension by approximately 50 feet, thereby creating a separation between the trail edge or canyon bottom and privately owned lots. This approach would ensure that these indirect impacts on wildlife movement from use of these lots are reduced to a level that is less than significant.

Implementation of these measures will mitigate the impact of the project on wildlife movement to some extent. The overall impact on regional wildlife movement will remain significant after implementation of these mitigation measures.

San Francisquito Canyon/Significant Ecological Area No. 19

Approximately 103 acres of the Project site are located within Significant Ecological Area (SEA) 19. SEA 19 is the floodplain of the San Francisquito Creek from the boundary of Angeles National Forest (approximately 1/2-mile north of the site) to its confluence with the Santa Clara River. Of the 103 acres, 28.7 acres is located in the northern portion of the site (Planning Area C) and 74.3 acres is in the southern portion of the site (Planning Area D). The Revised Project Design would not directly encroach into the 28.7-acre portion of the SEA. However, the Revised Project Design would eliminate the need for adjacent property owners to use an at-grade river crossing of SEA 19 for future access by providing stub road connections to the Project site. This is a beneficial impact.

In order to reduce the amount of potential human disturbance to San Francisquito Canyon and the SEA, an educational pamphlet, to be distributed at the time of home sale, will be developed that will address the following:

- SEA No. 19 and its ecological significance.
- Sensitive biological resources in the area.
- Living in a fire-prone area.
- Living in a transitional zone between natural and developed areas.

A buffer zone containing natural vegetation with a width of not less than 50 feet is proposed along the edge of the project adjacent to San Francisquito Canyon Creek. Fencing along this buffer should be used to discourage human encroachment into those areas of the SEA that will not be encroached upon as a result of project implementation. Signs should also be placed on all fences in this area identifying the SEA and requesting that this area not be entered.

During the environmental review of the Revised Project Design, an additional mitigation measure was recommended to reduce direct impacts on SEA 19 from the construction of flood proofing measures necessary to protect the recreational complex in Area D (Lots 1711-1713). This measure requires that flood proofing measures be installed in a setback area behind the natural streambank in these areas. This technique will ensure that there is no change to the natural streambanks of the creek. Therefore, potential direct impacts to habitat of the unarmored threespine stickleback (UTS) within SEA 19 (San Francisquito Creek) will not occur. The commitment to this approach to construction of the flood proofing measures will be incorporated into subsequent 40-scale engineering of the Final Tract Map.

With the incorporation of this mitigation measure and other mitigation measures described above, the Revised Project Design's direct impacts to biological resources within the SEA would be mitigated to a level considered less than significant. However, indirect impacts associated with human activity cannot be fully mitigated due to the inability to fully control human activity. As a result, indirect impacts on the SEA are considered potentially significant.

(2) Traffic/Access

Summary of Revised Project Design: Implementation of the Revised Project Design will result in a reduction of approximately 8,466 daily trips (29%) when compared to the RPC Preferred Project and in a reduction of 9,696 daily trips (32%) when compared to the proposed project. As a result, fewer unavoidable significant traffic impacts will occur with the Revised Project Design as compared to both the RPC Preferred Project and the

proposed project. The addition of the sports complex in Planning Area D will not result in any new significant traffic impacts.

Potential Effect: The Revised Project Design will generate approximately 20,984 average daily trips (ADTs), with 1,515 ADTs in the a.m. peak hour and 2,195 ADTs in the p.m. peak hour. Revised Project Design-generated traffic is expected to result in significant impacts at 7 of the 24 traffic study area intersections in the a.m. peak period and 8 of the 24 traffic study area intersections in the p.m. peak period.

Finding: In general, the impacts identified in the FEIR cannot be mitigated to a level of insignificance. However, conditions of approval and features incorporated into the Revised Project Design will reduce, to the extent feasible, the substantial, adverse environmental effects.

Facts: The above finding is made in conjunction with a Statement of Overriding Considerations which is simultaneously being adopted for the Revised Project Design (see Section 6) and in that the following measures will partially mitigate the identified impacts:

1. Provide the traffic mitigation measures specified in the tentative tract map conditions of approval, including participation in the Valencia Bridge and Thoroughfare District..

2. Provide intersection improvements located in the City of Santa Clarita as specified in the tentative tract map conditions of approval, subject to City approval.

3. A parking monitoring program shall be established by the applicant for the sports complex to determine whether scheduled events create parking conflicts resulting in short-term parking shortages at the complex. Monitoring shall occur for 12 months after full development of the site with the findings of this monitoring provided to the County Department of Public Works and Department of Parks and Recreation. Should the monitoring program determine parking conflicts, solutions could include adjustments in the scheduling of sports events and the hiring of individuals to direct traffic. Costs associated with the parking monitoring program and any subsequent actions, if required, shall be the responsibility of the project applicant.

4. The site plan for the sports complex shall include pedestrian and cyclist safety provisions. Safety measures could include, but are not limited to, marked/lighted crosswalks, drop off areas on either side of HH Street, etc. These measures shall be

implemented prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy of the sports complex.

(3) Air Quality

Summary of Revised Project Design: The Revised Project Design will generate fewer emissions overall than both the RPC Preferred Project and the proposed project because of the reduction in dwelling units from 2,502 units and from 3,000 to 1,791 units, respectively. However, worst case analysis of construction emissions indicates that air quality threshold-related impacts will be the same for the Revised Project Design as for the RPC Preferred Project and the proposed project. As in the case of both the RPC Preferred Project and the proposed project, operational impacts for the Revised Project Design will exceed the SCAQMD thresholds and are therefore unavoidably significant even though the emissions generated will be significantly reduced.

Potential Effect: Construction and site preparation will cause short-term impacts consisting of mobile emissions and fugitive dust.

Finding: The impact identified in the FEIR cannot be mitigated to a level of insignificance. However, conditions of approval and features incorporated into the Revised Project Design will reduce, to the extent feasible, the adverse environmental effect.

Facts: The above finding is made in conjunction with a Statement of Overriding Considerations which is simultaneously being adopted for the Revised Project Design (see Section 6) and in that the following measures will partially mitigate the identified impacts:

1. During clearing, grading, earth-moving, or excavation operations, fugitive dust emissions shall be controlled by regular watering, paving of construction roads, or other dust-preventive measures using the following procedures:

    - All material excavated or graded shall be sufficiently watered to prevent excessive amounts of dust. Watering, with complete coverage, shall occur at least twice daily, preferably in the late morning and after work is done for the day.

    - All clearing, grading, earth-moving, or excavation activities shall cease during periods of high winds (i.e., greater than 20 mph averaged over 1 hour).

- All material transported offsite shall be either sufficiently watered or securely covered to prevent excessive amounts of dust.

- The area disturbed by demolition, clearing, grading, earth-moving, or excavation operations shall be minimized at all times.

2. After clearing, grading, earth-moving, or excavation operations and during construction activities, fugitive dust emissions shall be controlled using the following measures:

   - Portions of the construction site to remain inactive longer than a period of 3 months shall be seeded and watered until grass cover is grown.

   - All active portions of the construction site shall be watered to prevent excessive amounts of dust.

3. At all times, fugitive dust emissions shall be controlled using the following procedures:

   - Onsite vehicle speed shall be limited to 15 mph.

   - All onsite roads shall be paved as soon as feasible or watered periodically or chemically stabilized.

4. At all times during the construction phase, ozone precursor emissions from construction equipment shall be controlled using the following procedures:

   - Equipment engines shall be maintained in good condition and in proper tune according to manufacturer's specifications.

   - During smog season (May through October), the construction period should be lengthened to minimize vehicles and equipment operating at the same time.

   - Construction equipment should not be left idling for a period longer than 60 seconds.

5. Concurrent with an application for a grading permit, the applicant shall propose measures to suppress fugitive dust generated during construction activities. These measures shall be incorporated as conditions of grading

permit approval. SCAQMD Rule 403 requires that fugitive dust be controlled so that the presence of such dust does not remain visible in the atmosphere beyond the property line of the emission source. In addition, SCAQMD Rule 402 requires implementation of dust suppression techniques to prevent fugitive dust from creating a nuisance offsite.

Potential Effect: The Revised Project Design operation will generate long-term impacts including mobile emissions from project-generated traffic and stationary emissions from energy consumption. The Revised Project Design exceeds SCAQMD suggested threshold criteria for potentially significant daily emissions.

Finding: The impact identified in the FEIR cannot be mitigated to a level of insignificance. However, conditions of approval and features incorporated into the Revised Project Design will reduce, to the extent feasible, the substantial, adverse environmental effects.

Facts: The above finding is made in conjunction with a Statement of Overriding Considerations which is simultaneously being adopted for the Revised Project Design (see Section 6) and in that the following will partially mitigate the identified impacts:

1. Several Project design features would help to reduce mobile, operational emissions. Bike paths located along onsite collector roads would connect to planned bike lanes along Copper Hill Drive and McBean Parkway, as well as provide dedicated travel paths onsite. These features would provide incentives for using bicycles, in addition to walking, as an alternative form of transit.

2. Other Project design features include the onsite retail commercial center which would provide needed services and limit the need for residents to travel into the City of Santa Clarita.

3. Numerous circulation enhancements designed to improve traffic flow and reduce idling emissions are provided as mitigation measures under Traffic/Access. Implementation of these measures would further mitigate air quality impacts by reducing potential vehicular emissions.

4. During operation of the Project, the following mitigation measures shall be implemented to reduce regional air emissions:

    - The Homeowner's Association will maintain a list of commuter carpool destinations to facilitate and coordinate carpooling from the

Project to employment centers and Metrolink stations. If sufficient ridership exists, a shuttle to Metrolink shall be established in conjunction with a local Transportation Management Agency or organization.

- The Project applicant shall coordinate with Santa Clarita Transit to provide public transit service to the southern portion of the site and the applicant shall provide adequate bus stops with shelter.

(4) Aesthetics/Visual

Summary of Revised Project Design: The Revised Project Design has increased the acreage devoted to residential use in comparison to the RPC Preferred Project (from 628 to 849.4 acres) while at the same time decreasing the total dwelling unit count from 2,502 to 1,791. These changes are associated with increases in average lot sizes in Planning Areas B and C, and reductions in grading. Total grading is reduced by 50 percent in Planning Area B and by 5.4 percent in Planning Area C. Development in Planning Area A is nearly the same under the Revised Project Design as under the RPC Preferred Project: total dwelling units remain the same at 1,552 and community and commercial land uses are the same. Natural open space in Planning Area A is decreased from 71.6 acres to 51.9 acres under the Revised Project Design in order to develop larger lots and to reduce the height of slopes adjacent to the school site.

The Revised Project Design addresses the concerns expressed by the Board regarding the need for larger lots and reduced grading in Planning Area B. Grading for individual lots in Area B has been limited to providing building pads; the non-pad areas of the large lots will be left in natural open space. This configuration provides a distinctly rural character to the proposed development in these higher elevations on the site. In comparison with the RPC Preferred Project, the Revised Project Design's reduction in units and increased lot sizes in Planning Areas B and C, and reduced grading in Planning Area B will reduce the visual impacts in these areas.

Potential Effect: Implementation of the Revised Project Design will result in long-term, permanent changes to the visual and aesthetic character of the site, primarily related to changes in topography and the introduction of urban land uses into a predominantly vacant property. The Project will result in significant impacts from 3 of the 6 viewpoint locations analyzed in the FEIR. Mitigation in the form of landscaping will reduce impacts, but not to less than significant levels.

Finding: Some of the impacts identified in the FEIR cannot be mitigated to a level of insignificance. However, conditions of approval and features incorporated into the Revised Project Design will reduce, to the extent feasible, or avoid identified or potential significant environmental effects.

Facts: The above finding is made in conjunction with a Statement of Overriding Considerations which is simultaneously being adopted for the Revised Project Design (see Section 6) and in that the following measures will partially mitigate the identified impact:

Implementation of the proposed landscape master plan will reduce the adverse impacts of the Revised Project Design on the visual environment. Graded areas will be revegetated and landscaping will buffer development from surrounding visual receptors. In addition, the following mitigation measure will be required.

1. Prior to final tract map approval, structures in the northernmost area of the development (Planning Area C) shall be set back a sufficient distance such that residential structures are not silhouetted against the skyline. This will reduce potential viewers on San Francisquito Canyon Road in the Angeles National Forest from seeing pronounced urban development on the ridgeline.

(5) Police/Sheriff

Summary of Revised Project Design: Implementation of the Revised Project Design will result in the potential need for fewer law enforcement services than under both the RPC Preferred Project and the proposed project because of the reduction in the total number of dwelling units.

Potential Effect: The Revised Project Design will result in approximately 5,158 new residents at project buildout. This will result in new demands for police protection services which are considered significant after mitigation because of currently limited staffing in the County Sheriff's Department to serve the Project area and because of uncertainty and limitations on funding.

Finding: Some of the impacts identified in the FEIR cannot be mitigated to a level of insignificance. However, conditions of approval and features incorporated into the Revised Project Design will reduce, to the extent feasible, the substantial, adverse environmental effects.

Facts: The above finding is made in conjunction with a Statement of Overriding Considerations which is simultaneously being adopted for the Revised Project Design (see Section 6) and in that the following measures will partially mitigate the identified impacts:

1. The project developer shall consult with the Santa Clarita Sheriff's Department substation to identify measures such as knock-boxes that allow emergency access into gated portions of the project site.

2. During design and layout of commercial buildings onsite, the following measures shall be included into the design: 1) proper lighting in open areas and parking lots; 2) visibility of doors and windows from the street and between buildings; 3) adequate parking spaces in parking lots to accommodate shoppers and employees; 4) building address numbers lighted and readily apparent from the street for emergency response agencies.

Cumulative Impacts

Summary of Revised Project Design: Cumulative impacts will be reduced to the extent that the underlying impacts of the Revised Project Design are less than those of the RPC Preferred Project and the proposed project, as outlined above.

(1) Potential Effect: A number of development projects (the "related projects") are pending or approved in the vicinity of the Revised Project Design site. The effects of those projects, in conjunction with the Revised Project Design, will have a significant cumulative impact upon biological resources. Specifically, the six related projects within San Francisquito Canyon, as identified in the FEIR, together with the Revised Project Design, will result in a loss of natural open space for wildlife habitat that supports sensitive species within the San Francisquito Canyon watershed that is considered a significant cumulative impact. The Newhall Ranch project also represents a significant cumulative project that will contribute to the regional loss of sensitive and non-sensitive habitats.

Finding: The significant cumulative impacts on biological resources identified in the FEIR cannot be found to be mitigated to a level of insignificance. However, conditions of approval and features incorporated into the Revised Project Design will reduce, to the extent feasible, the Revised Project Design's contribution to the significant cumulative environmental effects.

Facts: The above finding is made in conjunction with a Statement of Overriding Considerations which is simultaneously being adopted for the Revised Project Design (see Section 6), in that the measures set forth in Section 2(1), above, will partially mitigate the identified impacts, and in that mitigation measures are or will be required for the related projects to reduce their individual contributions to the significant cumulative biological resource impacts.

(2) Potential Effect: A number of related projects are pending or approved in the vicinity of the Revised Project Design site. The effects of those projects, in conjunction with the Revised Project Design, will have a significant cumulative impact upon traffic/access. The analysis in the FEIR concludes that on a cumulative basis, 16 of the 31 traffic study area intersections will be significantly impacted in the a.m. peak period and 17 of the 31 intersections will be significantly impacted in the p.m. peak period. Copper Hill Drive from McBean Parkway to Newhall Ranch Road would also be impacted.

Finding: The potential significant cumulative impacts on traffic/access identified in the FEIR cannot be conclusively found to be mitigated to a level of insignificance. However, conditions of approval and features incorporated into the Revised Project Design will reduce, to the extent feasible, the Revised Project Design's contribution to the significant cumulative environmental effects.

Facts: The above finding is made in conjunction with a Statement of Overriding Considerations which is simultaneously being adopted for the Revised Project Design (see Section 6), in that the measures set forth in Section 2(2), above, will partially mitigate the identified impacts, and in that mitigation measures are or will be required for the related projects to reduce their individual contributions to the significant cumulative traffic/access impacts.

(3) Potential Effect: A number of related projects are pending or approved in the vicinity of the Revised Project Design site. The effects of those projects, in conjunction with the Revised Project Design, will have a significant cumulative impact upon regional air quality based on project thresholds of significance and analysis established by the South Coast Air Quality Management District.

Finding: The significant cumulative impacts on regional air quality identified in the FEIR cannot be found to be mitigated to a level of insignificance. However, conditions of approval and features incorporated into the Revised Project Design will reduce, to the extent feasible, the Revised Project Design's contribution to the significant cumulative environmental effects.

Facts: The above finding is made in conjunction with a Statement of Overriding Considerations which is simultaneously being adopted for the Revised Project Design (see Section 6), in that mitigation measures to reduce energy-related operational and circulation-flow related emissions have been incorporated in the Revised Project Design, as described in Section 1 above, and in that mitigation measures will be required for the related projects to reduce their individual contributions to regionally significant air quality impacts. In addition, the SCAQMD indicates that through the Air Quality Management Plan adopted by the SCAQMD air quality has and will continue to improve despite growth envisioned by the County General Plan when considering various measures being implemented or planned in the AQMP.

(4) Potential Effect: A number of related projects are pending or approved in the vicinity of the Revised Project Design site. The effects of those projects, in conjunction with the Revised Project Design, will have a significant cumulative impact upon the aesthetic/visual character of the Revised Project Design site and the San Francisquito Canyon area.

Finding: The significant cumulative impacts on the aesthetic/visual character of the Revised Project Design site and surrounding area identified in the FEIR cannot be found to be mitigated to a level of insignificance. However, conditions of approval and features incorporated into the Revised Project Design will reduce, to the extent feasible, the Revised Project Design's contribution to the significant cumulative environmental effects.

Facts: The above finding is made in conjunction with a Statement of Overriding Considerations which is simultaneously being adopted for the Revised Project Design (see Section 6), in that the measures set forth in Section 1, above, will partially mitigate the identified impacts, and in that mitigation measures are or will be required for the related projects to reduce their individual contributions to the significant cumulative aesthetic/visual impacts.

(5) Potential Effect: A number of related projects are pending or approved in the vicinity of the Revised Project Design site. The effects of those projects, in conjunction with the Revised Project Design, could have a significant cumulative impact upon future population, housing and employment growth projections in the Santa Clarita Valley. Specifically, cumulative development from these related projects, in conjunction with the Revised Project Design, could potentially exceed the growth projections made by the County and represent a substantial portion of growth projected by SCAG in the Regional Comprehensive Plan.

Finding: The significant cumulative impacts on socioeconomic factors identified in the FEIR cannot be found to be mitigated to a level of insignificance. However, findings of approval for the Revised Project Design are such that the Revised Project Design will not contribute to the potential significant cumulative environmental effects.

Facts: The above finding is made in conjunction with a Statement of Overriding Considerations which is simultaneously being adopted for the Revised Project Design (see Section 6), and in that, as demonstrated by the analysis in the FEIR, although cumulative development exceeding the County's growth projections would be considered a significant cumulative impact, the Revised Project Design's contribution to such impact would be considered less than significant, since no amendment to County population, housing or employment projections is being made or is considered required to be made.

(6) Potential Effect: A number of related projects are pending or approved in the vicinity of the Revised Project Design site. The effects of those projects, in conjunction with the Revised Project Design, could potentially have a significant cumulative impact upon police protection services.

Finding: The potentially significant cumulative impacts on police protection services identified in the FEIR cannot be found to be mitigated to a level of insignificance. However, conditions of approval and features incorporated into the Revised Project Design will reduce, to the extent feasible, the Revised Project Design's contribution to the potential significant cumulative environmental effects. Similar measures can and should be required of other projects.

Facts: The above finding is made in conjunction with a Statement of Overriding Considerations which is simultaneously being adopted for the Revised Project Design (see Section 6), in that the measures set forth in Section 1, above, will partially mitigate the identified impact, and in that tax revenues generated by the Revised Project Design and the related projects could be used to mitigate the additional cumulative demands placed on the Sheriff's Department.

(7) Potential Effect: A number of related projects are pending or approved in the vicinity of the Revised Project Design site. The effects of those projects, in conjunction with the Revised Project Design, could have a significant cumulative impact upon the fire protection services.

Finding: The potentially significant cumulative impacts on fire protection services identified in the FEIR cannot be found to be mitigated to a level of insignificance. However, conditions of approval and features incorporated into the Revised Project

Design will reduce, to the extent feasible, or avoid the Revised Project Design's contribution to the potential significant cumulative environmental effects and similar measures can and should be required of all related projects.

Facts: The above finding is made in conjunction with a Statement of Overriding Considerations which is simultaneously being adopted for the Revised Project Design (see Section 6), in that the measures set forth in Section 1, above, will partially mitigate the identified impact by mitigating Revised Project Design-specific impacts to a level that is considered less than significant, and in that mitigation measures (including the payment of fees to the Fire Department under the County's Fee Program for the Benefit of Consolidated Fire Protection) will be required for the related projects to reduce their contributions to significant cumulative fire protection services impacts.

(8) Potential Effect: A number of related projects are pending or approved in the vicinity of the Revised Project Design site. The effects of those projects, in conjunction with the Revised Project Design, will have a significant cumulative impact upon schools. Cumulative development would exceed student projections through the projected planning years of the respective school districts. As a result, the cumulative impact would be significant.

Finding: The significant cumulative impacts on schools identified in the FEIR cannot be found to be mitigated to a level of insignificance. However, conditions of approval and features incorporated into the Revised Project Design will reduce the Revised Project Design's contribution to the significant cumulative environmental effects to a less than significant level.

Facts: The above finding is made in conjunction with a Statement of Overriding Considerations which is simultaneously being adopted for the Revised Project Design (see Section 6), in that the measures set forth in Section 1, above, will partially mitigate the identified impact by mitigating the Revised Project Design-specific impacts to a level that is considered less than significant, and in that mitigation measures (including the payment of statutory school fees) will be required for the related projects to reduce their contributions to significant cumulative school impacts.

(9) Potential Effect: A number of related projects are pending or approved in the vicinity of the Revised Project Design site. The effects of those projects, in conjunction with the Revised Project Design, will have a significant cumulative impact upon solid waste.

Finding: The significant cumulative impacts on solid waste identified in the FEIR cannot be found to be mitigated to a level of insignificance. However, conditions of approval and features incorporated into the Revised Project Design will reduce the Revised Project Design's contribution to the significant cumulative environmental effects to a less than significant level. Similar measures can and should be required of all related projects.

Facts: The above finding is made in conjunction with a Statement of Overriding Considerations which is simultaneously being adopted for the Revised Project Design (see Section 6), in that the measures set forth in Section 1, above, will partially mitigate the identified impact by mitigating the Revised Project Design-specific impacts on solid waste and household hazardous waste to a level that is considered less than significant, and in that mitigation measures will be required for the related projects to reduce their contributions to the significant cumulative solid waste impacts. In addition, the County continues to implement its Integrated Solid Waste Management Plan irrespective of this one project. As part of those efforts, the County is required to meet State mandates for reduction of waste in an effort to conserve limited resources, including landfills.

(10) Potential Effect: A number of related projects are pending or approved in the vicinity of the Revised Project Design site. The effects of those projects, in conjunction with the Revised Project Design, will have a significant cumulative impact upon library services. Specifically, based on the cumulative impacts for library services calculated using the County's Development Monitoring System (March 1995), the total cumulative demand for library material items and library space is 346,146 items and 60,573 square feet of library space. The Revised Project Design's contribution to the cumulative demand is approximately 5 percent which is considered potentially significant but which can be compensated for through an agreement with the Library Department.

Finding: The potentially significant cumulative impacts on library services identified in the FEIR cannot be found to be mitigated to a level of insignificance. However, conditions of approval and features incorporated into the Revised Project Design will reduce the Revised Project Design's contribution to the potential significant cumulative environmental effects to a less than significant level. Similar measures can and should be required of all related projects.

Facts: The above finding is made in conjunction with a Statement of Overriding Considerations which is simultaneously being adopted for the Revised Project Design (see Section 6), in that the measures set forth in Section 1, above, will partially mitigate the identified impact by mitigating the Revised Project Design-specific impacts on library services to a level that is considered less than significant, and in that mitigation measures

can and should be required for the related projects to reduce their contributions to the significant cumulative library service impacts.

SECTION 3

GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS OF THE REVISED PROJECT DESIGN

CEQA identifies a project as growth-inducing (i.e., a project involving spatial, economic or population growth in a geographic area) if it is characterized by any one of the following criteria:

- Removal of an impediment to growth (e.g., establishment of an essential public service or the provision of new access to an area).
- Economic expansion or growth (e.g., changes in revenue base employment expansion, etc.).
- Establishment of a precedent setting action (e.g., an innovation, a radical change in zoning or general plan amendment approval).
- Development or encroachment in an isolated or adjacent area of open space (being distinct from an "infill" type of project).

Should a project meet any one of the above listed criteria, it can be considered growth-inducing. The growth-inducing impacts of the Revised Project Design are evaluated below with regard to these four criteria.

The Revised Project Design site is located at the outskirts of urban development that is expanding from the City of Santa Clarita and within the County of Los Angeles. Services, such as water and sewer hook ups are presently limited within San Francisquito Canyon and could not support the type of project proposed. The Revised Project Design would extend public utilities to the vicinity of the project boundaries in order to develop the site. In addition, roadways would be extended to provide access to the site, however, access alignments are part of the planned roadway network shown in the Circulation Element of the Area Plan. As a result, the extension of planned roadways is not considered a growth-inducing impact of the project but rather the implementation of General Plan growth policy previously considered and lawfully adopted by the Board. Public services, such as sewer and water, would be extended to the project site, and designed specifically for the proposed project with capacity required by the applicable servicing agency. In addition, except as described below with respect to such adjacent properties, roadways within the site boundaries have been designed so that extensions to serve offsite properties would be

secondary and not primary. It should be noted that, except for the stub road connections to adjacent properties to the east, the stub roads for emergency access are not designed for enhanced access and, therefore, would not result in nor are meant to be a removal of an impediment to growth. Consequently, except as described below with respect to adjacent properties to the east, project access would not remove an impediment to growth.

An additional factor to be considered is the location of the Revised Project Design relative to other areas available for growth. The Angeles National Forest is located approximately 0.5 mile north of the Revised Project Design site. The Forest provides a barrier to further urban growth in San Francisquito Canyon to the north of the Revised Project Design area. There are small ranch properties located in San Francisquito Canyon to the north of the proposed Revised Project Design. The Revised Project Design provides no major roads or other infrastructure improvements directly to these sites that would represent the removal of an impediment to growth. Additional infrastructure improvements and General Plan and/or Area Plan amendments would be needed to allow for further urban growth on these properties.

The Revised Project Design would add approximately 1,791 housing units and 104 permanent onsite jobs to the Santa Clarita Valley. The permanent employment opportunities associated with the Project are not substantial and will not create a demand for additional housing in the area. The Revised Project Design is planned to meet a projected demand for housing in the Santa Clarita Valley. No significant economic growth is anticipated to result from the Revised Project Design other than current plan projections.

The Revised Project Design is a proposal to continue the pattern of residential development experienced in the area. The Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan states currently that continued residential development is expected within the Bouquet Planning Area subject to constraints of the roadway network. The Revised Project Design includes residential development at a lower density than other existing residential development projects to the south and east of the Revised Project Design site. The Revised Project Design can be considered part of a recognized and anticipated pattern of growth and is not considered to be a precedent setting action. While the Revised Project Design will result in the development of an area that is currently open space, any growth inducing impact of this growth is limited by the topography of the surrounding areas, existing planned density, and the permanent open space resource of the Angeles National Forest to the north of the Revised Project Design.

As conditioned, the Revised Project Design is required to provide two stub roads, with full street improvements (curb, gutter, base, pavement, sidewalk, street lights and

trees) as required by the Department of Public Works to accommodate future General Plan permitted development, to adjacent properties to the east in San Francisquito Canyon. This could be viewed to remove an impediment to growth for these properties. However, the Board required the access roads to these adjacent properties in order to eliminate the need for adjacent property owners to use an at-grade river crossing of SEA 19 for future access, thus resulting in a beneficial impact to the SEA from any future development of these properties. This design change is specifically found by the Board not to be growth inducing. In addition, these adjacent properties are classified by the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan as non-urban which limits significantly their development potential as does the fact that portions of these properties are located within SEA 19 itself. General and Area Plan amendments would have to be sought and approved before any significant urban development could occur on these properties. None of the adjacent property owners have filed applications for such amendments or any other major development of their properties. Thus, the Revised Project Design cannot conclusively be considered growth-inducing to adjacent properties.

SECTION 4

FINDINGS REGARDING ALTERNATIVES

Alternatives to the proposed project described in the Draft EIR were analyzed. The alternatives discussed in the Draft EIR constitute a reasonable range of considerations necessary to permit a reasoned choice. In this case, in response to the Draft EIR and public and agency input, the Board has approved a reduced density alternative (i.e., the Revised Project Design) with less density than the Reduced Density Alternative analyzed in the Draft EIR, as described in Section 2 of the Final Environmental Impact Report. The Draft EIR discussed the Reduced Development Area Alternative as the environmentally superior alternative. However, the Board did not select this alternative, and instead approved the Revised Project Design with the FEIR mitigation measures which will lessen the significant environmental effects of the project as originally proposed, while still achieving most of the objectives of the proposed project. Consequently, in accordance with Section 15093 of the State CEQA Guidelines, a Statement of Overriding Considerations is hereby adopted (see Section 6) to substantiate the Board's decision to reject the environmentally superior alternative because of the benefits afforded by the Revised Project Design as well as other reasons set forth in Section 6.

Alternative 1 - The "No Project" Alternative

Description of Alternative: The FEIR describes the "No Project" alternative as a continuation of existing conditions on the project site. The project site would remain essentially vacant, with continuation of existing agricultural and ranch uses, including agricultural operations within SEA 19. The Revised Project Design would not occur.

Comparison of Effects: The "No Project" alternative would eliminate the environmental effects of the Revised Project Design identified in Sections 1 and 2 herein. However, the "No Project" alternative would also not provide the beneficial effects that the Revised Project Design would have. The "No Project" alternative would not provide the variety of housing types in close proximity to employment centers the Project provides. Street improvements and extensions scheduled to be included with the Project would not happen. Public recreational facilities, commercial services and the school/park/fire station sites would not occur.

Finding: The "No Project" alternative is not preferred because this alternative fails to meet any of the objectives of the proposed project as identified in the FEIR or to provide any of the benefits of the Revised Project Design as set forth herein.

Facts: The above finding is made in that the "No Project" alternative would not (1) create a high quality, master planned, low density, residential environment that is compatible with existing and planned residential areas to the south, (2) provide an opportunity for preservation in perpetuity of the undisturbed portions of SEA 19 located within the project boundaries, (3) preserve in perpetuity the significant historic resources of the site for the residents of the Santa Clarita Valley, (4) provide a range of housing types to meet the demand for additional housing, (5) develop the project site in the manner proposed by the Applicant in its burden-of-proof, or (6) provide a range of active and passive recreational opportunities, including a high quality equestrian trail system, within the project to serve residents of the project and the surrounding area and to meet a regional need for recreational sites to meet the needs of youth sports. In addition, the undeveloped property is not providing any tangible benefits to the community at large. Eventually the entire site could attract nuisance dumping and off-road use. As surrounding areas are developed, the potential for human and animal impacts on the SEA will increase. The project site is well suited to large scale residential development. The Revised Project Design will allow for a variety of housing types to meet the needs of a range of buyers. Commercial acreage is needed to serve new residential development, school sites are needed to accommodate new students and the sports complex in Planning Area D is needed to meet the increasing demand in the Santa Clarita Valley for recreational sites.

Alternative 2 - Existing Santa Clarita Valley Areawide General Plan ("SCVAGP") Alternative

Description of Alternative: Alternative 2 represents development of the Revised Project Design site pursuant to the existing SCVAGP land use designations, permitting approximately 1,109 dwelling units. Alternative 2 represents 1,891 less dwelling units or 63% of the proposed project and 682 less dwelling units or 38% of the Revised Project Design. In terms of spatial distribution, it is likely that development of this alternative would generally be within Planning Area A of the proposed project, where the urban designations exist. In order to develop 1,109 units in and immediately around the portions of the site designated urban, most of the units may have to be in multi-family housing and, thus, a broad range of housing types could not be provided. Also in order to develop 1,109 units in the urban designated portions of the site, it is likely that the existing structures defining the ranch would have to be demolished or removed from the site. Although some ridgelines would require grading to develop this alternative, grading would occur in a more limited area than with the proposed project or the Revised Project Design. Under this alternative, most of the site (approximately 1,300 acres) could be left as undisturbed natural open space.

Comparison of Effects: Alternative 2 would generally result in less severe impacts than the Revised Project Design. Indeed it would avoid certain significant traffic, biota, and aesthetic/visual impacts associated with the Revised Project Design. However, this alternative could still result in unavoidable significant traffic, air quality, biota and cumulative fire and police service impacts. Also, it could have a significant impact on cultural resources that the Revised Project Design does not have.

Finding: This alternative was not selected because it would not meet the Applicant's objectives including those County objectives of meeting housing demand and preserving the historic resources located on the Project site.

Facts: While several of the environmental impacts are avoided or lessened, several of the basic objectives of the proposed project are not met and several of the benefits associated with the Revised Project Design would not be maximized, as follows:

1. The Revised Project Design provides a more balanced mix of residential and commercial land uses.

2. Alternative 2 does not meet the objective of preserving the significant historic resources of the site for the residents of the Santa Clarita Valley.

3. Alternative 2 does not meet the objective of providing a range of housing types to meet the demand for additional housing .

4. Alternative 2 would not create as many construction and related jobs or generate as much real property and sales tax revenues and developer fees.

5. Alternative 2 would not create a youth sports complex to meet the growing need for recreational sites for youth sports in the Santa Clarita Valley.

Alternative 3 - Reduced Density Alternative

Description of Alternative: The alternative responds to several biological concerns raised by the Los Angeles County Significant Ecological Area Technical Advisory Committee (SEATAC) in its review of the initial conceptual plan for the project, although SEATAC also found this design to be biologically unacceptable. As a result of SEATAC input, several modifications were made to the proposed project. The most significant alterations reflected in the Revised Project Design which essentially address the concerns of the SEATAC include:

- The removal of multifamily residential development proposed in Planning Area D.
- Including a 200-foot buffer from development to the SEA.
- Reconfiguring Phase II to allow the collector road to become the edge of the development area.
- Increasing the densities to the west of San Francisquito Creek (e.g., substituting apartments for townhomes) to compensate for the units lost from the removal of development in Planning Area D.

With this reduced density alternative, areas of disturbance would avoid more sensitive areas and generally reduce the level of development across the site. A total of 976 acres of the 1,795 acre site would be developed with this alternative. This alternative would result in the construction of 2,644 dwelling units on 489 acres. In order to construct this alternative, a total of approximately 22.6 million cubic yards of cut and fill would be balanced on the site. As with the proposed project, this alternative would include both multi- and single-family residential uses. Open space for this alternative would include 1,164 acres, which include natural open space areas of SEA 19 and a 200-foot buffer zone. Two school sites, a swim and racket club, and approximately 40 acres of active

parks would be developed under this alternative. Infrastructure improvements would be similar to the proposed project and to the Revised Project Design.

Comparison of Effects: Alternative 3 would generally result in more severe impacts than the Revised Project Design. Although it would avoid certain significant biota and aesthetic/visual impacts associated with the Revised Project Design, this alternative would result in greater unavoidable significant traffic, air quality, cumulative fire and police service impacts. In addition, this alternative could result in greater impacts on the historical resources located on the project site than under the Revised Project Design.

Finding: This alternative was not selected because it would not be environmentally preferred over the Revised Project Design, nor does it have several of the benefits associated with the Revised Project Design.

Facts: The environmental impacts of this alternative are similar to or greater than those of the Revised Project Design, and this alternative does not have several of the benefits associated with the Revised Project Design, as follows:

1. This alternative would have significant impacts on the historic resources located on the site, whereas the Revised Project Design will preserve these resources in perpetuity for the residents of the Santa Clarita Valley.

2. Although under Alternative 3 the multi-family area in Planning Area D would not be developed and instead would be preserved as open space, such use would not provide as much benefit to the community as the use of this 27-acre area for a youth sports complex, as proposed in the Revised Project Design.

<u>Alternative 4</u> - Reduced Development Area Alternative

Description of Alternative: Alternative 4 compares a substantially reduced development footprint at a higher density. The unit count of development is reduced 33 percent from the proposed project and is 11 percent higher than the Revised Project Design. The area of disturbance and development is concentrated in the southern portion of the site and avoids any development within San Francisquito Creek. This alternative would consist of approximately 1,995 dwelling units, made up of both single family and multi-family residential. Development of these units would cover 428 acres of the project site. Under this alternative only one school would be developed, the swim and racquet club would remain, 24 acres of active parks would be developed and no commercial uses would be developed. Grading for development would require the balancing of 18.8 million cubic yards of cut and fill. 1,273 acres of open space would be provided under this alternative.

In comparison to the original concept plan reviewed by SEATAC, impacts to SEA 19 would be substantially lessened under this alternative by avoiding a creek crossing at the northern portion of the site and eliminating residential development in Planning Area D from the project. While this alternative would eliminate development of the northern portion of the site, open space in the southern portion of the site preserved with the proposed project and the Revised Project Design would be developed under this alternative. The majority of natural open space would exist in the northern half of the site, providing a more natural transition to the Angeles National Forest, with additional natural open space on the westernmost portion of the site.

Comparison of Effects: Alternative 4 would generally result in more severe impacts than the Revised Project Design. Although this alternative would avoid certain significant biota and aesthetic/visual impacts associated with the Revised Project Design, it would result in greater impacts on traffic, air quality and historic resources and greater cumulative fire and police service impacts than would the Revised Project Design. In addition, this alternative would still result in unavoidable significant biota and aesthetic/visual impacts.

Finding: Since this alternative would generally result in more severe impacts than the Revised Project Design, it was not selected . In addition, it does not meet the Applicant's objectives of providing a full range of housing types to meet the needs in the Santa Clarita Valley and preserving the significant historic resources of the site for the residents of the Santa Clarita Valley.

Facts: While several of the significant impacts of the Revised Project Design are lessened under this alternative, several of the basic objectives of the proposed project are not met and the benefits associated with the Revised Project Design would not be maximized under Alternative 4, as follows:

1. This alternative would have greater impacts on the historic resources located on the site, whereas the Revised Project Design will preserve these resources in perpetuity for the residents of the Santa Clarita Valley.

2. Although under Alternative 4 the multi-family area in Planning Area D would not be developed and instead would be preserved as open space, such use would not provide as much benefit to the community as the use of this 27-acre area for a youth sports complex, as proposed in the Revised Project Design.

3. This alternative would not provide a high quality equestrian trail system.

Alternative 5 - Emergency Access Alternative

Description of Alternative: Alternative 5 resulted from the Applicant proposing several alternatives for future emergency access to the site to meet the concerns of the Fire Department. Six different alternatives were identified by the Applicant or the Department and two of those have been incorporated into the project design. The Revised Project Design has been conditioned by the Fire, Planning, and Public Works Departments to include Alternative 3 (described below) as part of the Revised Project Design and been conditioned by the Board to include Alternative 4 as part of the Revised Project Design. The other four alternatives (1, 2, 5, and 6) could be developed as future streets (see Exhibit 3.4-8 in the Draft EIR). The Regional Planning and Fire Departments required that stub roads be provided within the project site for future streets should these streets become necessary, or required, in the future. The six alternatives, including the proposed bridge, are further described below.

Alternative 1: A stub road is proposed in Planning Area B to connect with the land owned by Newhall Land and Farming to the south of the site. Presently, there are no immediate plans to develop such land; however, the stub road has been aligned to match a preliminary road configuration provided by the Newhall Land and Farming Company.

Alternative 2: This stub road in Planning Area A also would connect to land south of the project site owned by the Newhall Land and Farming Company.

Alternative 3 (Proposed): This access would consist of a 250-foot bridge spanning the main channel of San Francisquito Creek. As proposed, the bridge would connect the main north/south collector in Planning Area A through Planning Area D to San Francisquito Canyon Road and the future extension of McBean Parkway. This access point would not require a connection through land owned by another party as would the other alternatives.

Alternative 4: As originally proposed this access involved only one connection from the project site to adjacent properties to the east. The Commission required two connections as shown on the approved vesting tentative tract map. No known development of the adjacent properties is proposed at this time. The ultimate offsite alignment of these access roads would be determined by the property owners once developments are proposed for such properties. These connections were required by the Commission in order to eliminate the need for adjacent property owners to use an at-grade river crossing of SEA 19 for future access. This is a beneficial impact.

Alternative 5: The existing Southern California Edison (SCE) easement would be accessed with this alternative. The road proceeds from San Francisquito Canyon Road west past the project site, then south toward Tapia and Charlie Canyons. The unimproved access road is used by the SCE to access its transmission lines that pass by the site and by a residence on the western side of San Francisquito Creek just off the project site boundaries. This access road uses an at-grade stream crossing to traverse the creek. This alternative would consist of a stub road that could be connected to the existing unimproved road. However, for emergency access purposes, the road would require paving and other improvements to ensure all-weather access.

Alternative 6: This stub road would connect to existing fire roads and trails on the project site. No specific development is anticipated in this area, but this stub road has been requested by the Fire Department to provide multiple options for offsite emergency access. The fire road connects to the same general fire road system that travels to Tapia Canyon discussed under Alternative 5.

<u>Alternative 6</u> - Balanced Residential/Commercial Project Alternative

Description of Alternative: Alternative 6 was considered in response to concerns raised by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) regarding providing a balanced community (both housing and jobs). This type of project, in theory, would reduce the amount of vehicular travel necessary for commuting to work and shopping. In order to develop an alternative to support a large amount of commercial- and employment-generating uses, extensive grading beyond that presently proposed onsite would be required to create the necessary flat pads for commercial uses. To develop residential uses to balance the project, additional grading also would be likely in areas of the site previously left undisturbed.

This alternative was determined to be infeasible or environmentally inferior to the proposed project (and, therefore, to the Revised Project Design) for several reasons. First, the project site is located in an area considered to be the urban boundary (with the National Forest being the ultimate boundary). Taking into consideration surrounding development, the proposed project site likely would not be able to support a significant amount of employment-creating uses. To the south of the project site, cumulative development in the North River and surrounding area (within 2 miles) would provide 811,000 square feet of industrial uses and 868,000 square feet of commercial uses. As these projects are closer to major roadways and residential populations, they would capture a major portion of the available market. Any commercial or industrial development would be isolated at the project site and would probably not have a sufficient market draw to be successful.

In addition, the environmental impacts associated with providing a large amount of commercial or industrial uses onsite would be far greater than the proposed project and the Revised Project Design, requiring more extensive grading and additional infrastructure. Moreover, the costs associated with developing the site for commercial and industrial uses would be higher than other areas south of the site that are flatter. This type of development is not considered to be feasible given the constraints and location of the site as well as surrounding development. Therefore, this alternative was not carried forward for consideration.

Alternative 7 - Pedestrian Oriented Development Alternative

Description of Alternative: Alternative 7 was included for consideration to reflect a change in planning philosophy that the County of Los Angeles Regional Planning Department (RPD) is currently exploring. This change is a result of the continued effort on a regional scale to reduce automobile dependency and reduce the air quality degradation caused by an auto-dependent society. This policy change is consistent with, and supports the goals of, SCAG's Regional Comprehensive Plan and the Congestion Management Plan. This alternative was considered in the Draft EIR on a conceptual level for several reasons. First, the concept of pedestrian-oriented development includes several County departments, including Fire and Public Works. The proposed project has undergone years of review and approval from these departments; thus, the design of the proposed project would require significant and fundamental changes to implement this alternative. Second, the limitations of the site preclude wide ranges of development styles. Steep topography, geologic constraints, and biological constraints, to name a few, limit the site's capacity to support various types and designs of urban development. Third, the density considered under this alternative is similar to that of Alternative 2, Existing General Plan; the resulting impacts of this alternative and Alternative 2 would, therefore, be very similar. Finally, the inherent market feasibility of this type of alternative is also questionable. As a result, the environmental analysis was oriented to provide a general discussion of the benefits and drawbacks of this alternative.

The Pedestrian-Oriented Alternative is based on a planning doctrine that suggests that the placement of residential uses in close proximity to needed services will reduce the need of residents to use the automobile, and provide opportunities for residents to walk or bike to these services. Conventional suburban design (the type of development occurring over the last 20 years) has emphasized separation of uses, wide streets, and clearly defined boundaries between residential communities and employment centers. This conventional design has contributed to the traffic congestion and life styles readily apparent in Riverside, North Los Angeles County, and the Santa Clarity Valley. In contrast, a

pedestrian-oriented development breaks the normal design barriers and locates services, such as grocery, dry cleaning, and neighborhood commercial uses, within 0.25 mile of all residential uses. In addition, street systems are narrow, generally grid patterned, and designed for the pedestrian instead of the automobile.

For purposes of analysis, the Pedestrian-Oriented Alternative was assumed to have the following characteristics. The density of development would be slightly greater than the Existing General Plan Alternative, but only so much as to equate the air quality emissions of the two alternatives. Approximately 1,000 to 1,200 units were assumed. The layout of development would be concentrated in the lower portions of the site where topographic variation is minimized. Development of this type onsite would require a significant amount of grading, possibly equal to that of the project as originally proposed in order to keep terrain relatively flat to facilitate walking and provide sufficient building areas for higher density residential and commercial uses. Streets would be designed in a general grid pattern and would be reduced in size and capacity. Land uses onsite (residences, schools, parks, and commercial uses) would be integrated as much as possible to reduce the need for driving. Walkways and bike paths would criss-cross the development.

Comparison of Effects: Overall, the environmental impacts of this alternative would be reduced in comparison to the proposed project and to the Revised Project Design. The reduced development intensity would avoid many of the physical onsite impacts of the proposed project and the Revised Project Design. However, the primary purpose of this alternative is to further reduce the air quality impacts of the project. Although the alternative would have some effect on reducing the adversity of air emissions, the degree of reduction is uncertain. This alternative would reduce trips internal to the site but would have no effect on work-related trips, which have the heaviest impact on air quality emissions due to the longer travel distances involved. Consequently, although daily trips would be somewhat less, total VMT would not be significantly reduced. Even buildout of a project at existing General Plan densities would result in significant impacts.

Finding: This alternative was not selected because of its questionable marketability and because it was not environmentally preferred over the Revised Project Design.

Facts: The above finding was made in conjunction with a Statement of Overriding Considerations which is being simultaneously adopted for the Revised Project Design (see Section 6). Alternative 7 was rejected in favor of the Revised Project Design for the following reasons:

1. In order for this alternative to be successful, this type of development would have to be marketable. The complicating factor for this type of development is

that finding typical commercial uses (Supermarkets, 7-Elevens, etc.) to locate in pocket neighborhood centers without heavy pass-by traffic does not appear possible.

2. This type of development, while possibly mitigating air quality impacts, could result in greater impacts to earth resources, water resources, biological resources and cultural resources.

SECTION 5

MITIGATION MONITORING PLAN

In accordance with CEQA Section 21081.6, the Mitigation Monitoring Plan attached hereto as Exhibit A is hereby adopted in connection with the approval of the Revised Project Design.

SECTION 6

STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS

The FEIR identified and discussed significant effects which will occur as a result of the Revised Project Design. With the implementation of the mitigation measures discussed in the FEIR, these effects can be mitigated to levels of insignificance except for unavoidable significant Revised Project Design impacts on biota, traffic, air quality, the aesthetic/visual character of the Revised Project Design site, and police services, and except for unavoidable significant cumulative impacts on biological resources, traffic/access, regional air quality, aesthetic/visual character, socioeconomic factors, police protection services, fire protection services, schools, solid waste and libraries, as identified in Section 2 of these findings.

Having reduced the effects of the proposed project by approving the Revised Project Design and adopting the conditions of approval, and having balanced the benefits of the Revised Project Design against the Revised Project Design's potential unavoidable adverse impacts, the Board hereby determines that the benefits of the Revised Project Design outweigh the potential unavoidable adverse impacts, and that the unavoidable adverse impacts are nonetheless "acceptable," based on the following overriding considerations:

1. Construction of the Revised Project Design will create 7,761 construction and related jobs and will generate increased annual County and State revenues at

buildout from real property and sales taxes of approximately $3,192,000 and $1,093,000 respectively.

2. Construction of the Revised Project Design will require participation by the Project in the pending formation of the Valencia Bridge & Thoroughfare District, with a fee contribution currently estimated to be $15,697,000. In addition, the Revised Project Design will contribute $5,000 per unit for regional transportation needs in the area as determined by the Director of Public Works. Such contribution is over and above all other project specific and regional mitigation measures which otherwise are applicable to the Revised Project Design.

3. The Revised Project Design is participating in the accelerated construction of Copper Hill Drive, a six-lane master planned east-west Major Highway including a bridge over San Francisquito Creek that is vital to the circulation infrastructure in this part of the Santa Clarita Valley. Such participation shall also include the dedication of right-of-way for Copper Hill Drive and McBean Parkway at a value of $290,000. The Applicant appears to have been an important facilitator in working with adjacent property owners and the Department of Public Works to jointly plan an alignment of Copper Hill Drive that is superior to the previous proposal environmentally (e.g., it reduces impacts on SEA 19) and in more effectively meeting County-preferred design criteria.

4. The Revised Project Design will provide approximately $25,070,000 in school fees, water fees, sewer fees, park and recreation fees, library fees and fire fees, and will reserve one elementary school site.

5. The Revised Project Design will dedicate an approximately 4.3 acre site for a fire station.

6. The Revised Project Design has been designed to minimize impacts on the SEA portion of the site by eliminating the multi-family residential development previously proposed for this area and instead devoting a 27.2-acre portion of this 103-acre area to recreational open space as directed by the Commission.

7. The Revised Project Design will involve the leasing on a long term basis of 51.9 acres to the Santa Clarita Youth Sports Association which will help offset the Santa Clarita Valley area parkland deficit of over 600 acres.

8. The Revised Project Design will preserve and maintain the rest of the SEA in perpetuity. When combined with Newhall Land & Farming Co.'s anticipated land, this reservation will preserve most of the SEA 19 area from the Angeles National Forest to the Santa Clara River.

9. The Revised Project Design will provide a key trail and rest area in the County's master equestrian trail system that is a critical link to the Angeles National Forest and to Castaic Lake. This trail involves of 5.75 miles or 12.4 acres of land valued at $620,000.

10. Construction of the Revised Project Design will provide a full range of housing opportunities (from first time buyers to move-up plus multi-family housing for adults and families) and nearby commercial uses to meet the needs of the Santa Clarita Valley.

11. The Revised Project Design will preserve three main buildings and relocate three other buildings and structures located on the Project site as part of the former Harry Carey Ranch which are considered eligible for listing as a National Historic District. The preserved buildings and structures will be dedicated to the Santa Clarita Historical Society or a qualified non-profit historical organization to preserve and showcase the history of the Valley. Santa Clarita Valley historical memorabilia has been offered by the Harry Carey family for display on site in an interpretive center.

12. The Revised Project Design is a residential planned development ("RPD") that preserves 45.6% of the Project site as open space. This amount of open space exceeds the County's requirement for open space in a RPD by 15.6%.

13. The South Coast Air Quality Management District indicates that, when considering the various measures being implemented or planned pursuant to the Air Quality Management Plan adopted by the District, regional air quality has and will continue to improve despite growth envisioned by the County General Plan, including the Revised Project Design and the related projects identified in the FEIR.

14. Increased housing yields on the subject property as a result of the Revised Project Design are considered part of the overage necessary to meet existing population, housing and employment projections and are consistent with the Southern California Association of Government's projections that the Santa Clarita area will continue to be a housing-rich subregion.

15. Notwithstanding the FEIR finding that the effects of Revised Project Design, in conjunction with all related projects, will have a significant cumulative impact on solid waste disposal facilities, the County continues to implement its Integrated Solid Waste Management Plan. As a part of those efforts the County is required to meet State mandates for reduction of waste in order to conserve limited solid waste disposal resources, including landfills.

16. By providing stub road connections to adjacent properties, the Revised Project Design eliminates the need for adjacent property owners to use an at-grade river crossing of SEA 19 for future access, thereby resulting in a beneficial impact on SEA 19.

17. Notwithstanding the FEIR finding that the Revised Project Design has unavoidable significant impacts on certain biological resources, the Revised Project Design is located within 1/4 mile from the Angeles National Forest, with its permanent open space and biological resources in excess of 100,000 acres, with which the Revised Project Design is compatible through its low density residential concept plan with significant open space that provides for pedestrian and equestrian trail linkages to the National Forest.

SECTION 7

SECTION 15091 AND 15092 FINDINGS

Based on the foregoing findings and the information contained in the record, the Board has made one or more of the following findings with respect to the significant effects of the Revised Project Design:

a. Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Revised Project Design which mitigate or avoid many of the significant environmental effects thereof as identified in the FEIR.

b. Some changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and such changes have been adopted by such other agency, or can and should be adopted by such other agency.

c. Specific economic, social, or other considerations make infeasible the mitigation measures or alternatives identified in the FEIR.

Based on the foregoing findings and the information contained in the record, and as conditioned by the foregoing.

a. All significant effects on the environment due to the Revised Project Design have been eliminated or substantially lessened where feasible.

b. Any remaining significant effects on the environment found to be unavoidable are acceptable due to the overriding considerations set forth in the foregoing Statement of Overriding Considerations.

SECTION 8

SECTION 21082.1(c)(3) FINDINGS

Pursuant to Public Resource Code § 21082.1(c)(3), the Board hereby finds that the FEIR reflects the independent judgment of the lead agency.